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CONTENTS

	Page
Characteristics, Training and Performance of Houseparents — *Everett Wilcox, Ed.D.*	117
Achievement in Arithmetic Computation — *Carson Y. Nolan, Ph.D.*	125
Physical Education Tests for Boys — *S. L. Haliczer*	129
National Committee for the Deaf-Blind Children — *Roy M. Stelle*	134
The Status of Piano Technology — *S. B. Durfee*	137
A Survey of the Facilities for the Mentally Retarded-Blind in the United States — *Peter C. Parasheva*	139
The President's Corner — *Donald W. Overbeay*	146
To Put It Briefly — *V. R. Carter*	147
Index to Volume VIII	155

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Characteristics, Training, and Performance of Houseparents

By Everett Wilcox, Ed.D., Superintendent

Oregon State School for the Blind

The majority of all blind children in the United States continue to be educated in residential schools for the blind, nothwithstanding the growth of a movement to educate these children in the public school classes nearest their homes. At the residential schools, attention is now focused on the supervision of the blind child and his activities away from the classroom where he is under supervision and subsequently the influence of the houseparent more than any other staff member during his residential school career. The attitude and competency of the houseparent may determine the extent of the child's acceptance of institutional routine and later adjustment to school and society.

Because administrators have neither specified the qualifications for the houseparent positions, nor identified the particular skills required to discharge the duties competently, there is a growing demand that the factors affecting houseparent performance be examined.

The purpose of a study initiated in 1955 was to identify houseparent characteristics, the types of training available, and the factors that contribute to houseparent competency in residential schools for the blind.

The following questions encompass areas of the study:

1. What is the nature of the houseparent's position in the institutional staff pattern?
2. What administrative policy governs the selection and performance of houseparents?
3. What training is available to houseparents?
4. What characteristics are common to successful houseparents?

When the administrators recognize the houseparent influence upon the adjustment of blind children and appreciate the contribution of the out-of-school activities to child development, more intelligent planning can be instituted to improve the environment of children in residential schools for the blind.

Because of the complexity of the relationships of the children, their parents, the staff, and houseparents, a study of the houseparent function in a residential school for the blind required a variety of techniques.

Through interviews and questionnaires, 36 administrators, 117 houseparents, and 45 child-care authorities and co-workers of houseparents supplied data. The analysis of this data was limited to broad and general implications necessitated by the use of the survey procedures.

I

From the data it was determined that the typical houseparent is a woman over fifty years of age who is often a widow. She has less than three years of institutional experience and has completed the twelfth grade.

The ages of houseparents are older than those of fifteen years ago, and the children are generally under the care of persons who have an age level of their grandparents. Very few men occupy the position which

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The Editors requested Dr. Wilcox to summarize his thesis for the degree of Doctor of Education granted at the University of Oregon in June, 1958. Those wishing to read the unabridged study should write Dr. Wilcox or the University Library.

gives rise to a limited masculine influence upon the children.

Although the contribution of the houseparent to the adjustment of the blind child is considered as important as that of the teacher, the houseparents' salaries are one third less than that paid teachers and required qualifications for the position are lower than those expected of teachers. Houseparents are scheduled for longer hours of work than teachers and are required to supervise larger groups of children.

The salary schedule may determine the length of service in this field as well as the type of applicant for the position. The data indicated that there is no particular longevity in the houseparent position, since 50 per cent of those participating in this study had had experience in institutions of three years or less.

Another factor which influences those attracted to the houseparent position is the number of hours required to be on duty. Sixteen administrators noted that their houseparents were on duty 60 hours a week or less and three reported that their houseparents were on duty 5½ days. Six administrators scheduled houseparent duties for 40 hours or less each week.

The number of duty hours reported by houseparents varies from 40 hours per week (including time when the children were asleep) to 144 hours for six days, and, in two instances, seven days per week were acknowledged. In contrast to those that reported they were on duty all of the time, over 30 per cent of the houseparents were on duty 50 hours or less each week.

When comparing the work week data reported by houseparents with that assigned by administrators, it is noted that the percentage of houseparents working less than 55 hours per week is approximately one-half that reported by administrators. This difference may be contributed to the administrators' failure to count all of the time spent with the children as duty time inasmuch as houseparents are required to live in the dormitory and on call most of the time. Several administrators' attitudes may be reflected by comments such as "a real parent's work is never done," or, "houseparents have the children when they are not in school," or, "a competent houseparent has to be there on the job more than 40 hours per week."

In some states, administrators recognized that houseparent duties may require more than 40 hours per week for adequate supervision of the children and continue to pay the houseparents during the summer for the overtime accumulated during the winter.

Another estimate of the work load was determined by tabulating the number of children assigned to each houseparent. Difficulties arise for those houseparents who have a large number of small children to make ready for class, to groom for meals, or to supervise during their leisure time activities. Over 12 per cent of the houseparents were supervising groups of less than 15 children; 20 per cent cared for groups that had 16 to 20; almost as many had groups from 21 to 25; and, 11 per cent of the houseparents had from 26 to 30 children assigned to their care.

For comparative purposes the reported enrollments of ten selected residential schools were utilized to determine the ratio of children to each houseparent. The number of children per houseparent varied from 7.5 to 22. (Caution should be used when utilizing this houseparent-pupil ratio for the reason that, although the children are under the care of houseparents 128 hours per week, there is a wide latitude of supervision during the periods that the children are asleep.)

The houseparent then is required to be on duty more than 48 hours a week with 23 children, on the average, assigned to her care.

Characteristics of the houseparent role

and status were not clearly defined because the role requirements shift with each institution, and the houseparents are not aware of their responsibilities within the staff pattern. The inability of administrators to agree on expectations of the position prevent a detailed definition of the role.

Few sources disclose houseparent attitudes toward their duties and their position in the institutional staff structure. The houseparent's attitude toward her role is dependent, in part, upon her experience and attitude when she comes to the institution and the duties that are assigned to that particular position. To determine the attitudes of the houseparents, the 117 participants of this study were requested to check items comparing the houseparent function with other selected roles. The data reveals that almost 44 per cent of the houseparents felt they were acting in the capacity of a substitute parent. Although the spread of selection indicates that their roles may not be clearly defined, houseparents (91 per cent) agree that their contribution to the over-all adjustment of the blind child is as valuable as that of the teacher.

To further explore attitudes regarding their work, houseparents were asked to record factors that interfere with their duties. Whereas 9 per cent reported no difficulties, 12 per cent noted that their hours were too long, another 10 per cent replied that there were too many children placed under their care, and 3 per cent proposed that the range of children's ages in each group was too wide for adequate care and supervision. Lack of cooperation among staff members was indicated by 12 per cent of the houseparents. Only 13 per cent of the houseparents noted the close confinement of their work, and the same number depicted inaccessibility of information as contributing to difficulties.

Further duties which interferred with the performance of the houseparents were: mending, maid's work, household details, substituting for the cook on the cook's day off, playground duties, evening study hall, and nursing the children, who, when ill, were required to stay in the dormitory.

Where several houseparents (8 per cent) contended that lack of support in disciplining the children interferred with their duties, altogether 54 per cent of the houseparents required help with behavior problems as compared to 22 per cent who did not and another 9 per cent who needed aid intermittently.

When the houseparents were asked to name their sources of help with behavior problems in the dormitory, the replies indicate that 28 per cent contact the institution administrator; 14 per cent seek either the superintendent or principal; the same per cent confer with the dean of the school and 11 per cent go to either the principal or the supervising teacher. Regarding assistance from the faculty, 62 per cent of the houseparents confer with the teachers concerning the problems of the children.

Houseparents may become discouraged in their work and in their attempt to improve a situation in which they find themselves unless the suggestions presented to superiors are given consideration. Such attention was reported by 60 per cent of the houseparents; 8 per cent responded that suggestions were granted on an occasional trial, while 11 per cent reported that theirs were given no attention.

II

Supervision of houseparents is usually by the superintendent through irregularly scheduled conferences that are utilized often for in-service training.

The houseparents were requested to report the positions of their supervisors to determine the person responsible for the assignment of duties. Over 40 per cent of the houseparents designated the superintendent as supervisor, while 12 reported that the head houseparent had that authority. In other replies the position of super-

visor varied from psychologist to social worker, dean of students, and principal.

To explore the extent of communication with the supervisors, the houseparents were asked how often they confer with their supervisors. Over 52 per cent had no regularly scheduled conferences in contrast to the 4 per cent who had daily conferences with their supervisors, the 11 per cent who reported weekly sessions, and the 6 per cent who had one meeting monthly.

According to the administrators, the frequency of supervisory conferences varied from the daily to the annual incident. At 39 per cent of the institutions, irregular conferences were reported while almost 50 per cent of the remaining superintendents scheduled monthly conferences.

Only 24 per cent of the houseparents had regular conferences with their supervisors regarding problems of their children.

In addition, the houseparent seeks assistance from other staff members to cope with dormitory behavior problems.

III

The extent and type of training scheduled for houseparents may be limited by the experience that the houseparent had when she joined the staff. In listing the minimum experience qualifications, there were administrators who contended that experience was not important, and the selection depended upon the individual person. One noted that some of his best houseparents had no experience before they came to him. Apparently, however, as was pointed up by other administrators, one to three years' experience with children having no primary handicap was a necessary experience requirement. Two superintendents proposed that one year as a relief houseparent could be of considerable assistance.

Even though 3 superintendents preferred individuals who have been in personnel service, there was a tendency to emphasize experience with small children as a necessary requisite for the houseparent. Seven of the administrators proposed that valuable group work experience could include one or more years of youth counseling in summer camps or city recreation programs. Ten administrators suggested that two years' experience with handicapped children would be a desirable qualification for the houseparent position.

Twelve administrators placed the rearing of a successful family as the minimum qualification for the houseparent and as one explained, if he had to hire a grandparent, he would determine how successfully the applicant had reared her own children.

In considering the characteristics necessary for persons employed as houseparents of blind children, administrators repeatedly stressed affection for children, patience, tact, and the ability to cooperate with colleagues. The houseparent needs good health and stamina that can keep up with the children who will be under her care. Houseparents should have the ability to evaluate the job to be done and be able to meet, talk, and counsel with parents.

Regularly, administrators proposed that the qualifications for houseparents equal that of teachers. Specifically, administrators advised that houseparents should have the ability to organize the children's time, to introduce them to social graces, to sew, and to play the piano.

When the superintendents were asked to identify the qualifications for the houseparents who would be supervising children at different age levels, 8 administrators proposed general qualifications for the three age categories listed. Others proposed that the houseparents for children under seven years of age should be persons of considerable patience, be able to lift the children, and have a working knowledge of growth and development, psychology, and discipline. The administrators proposed that houseparents be in-

telligent and motherly with children, be kind in a firm disciplined manner, be orderly, be a "stickler" for cleanliness, and be punctual in all matters. There was a feeling that with children under seven years of age it would be an asset for the houseparent to be a good story teller.

For those children between the ages of seven and twelve the houseparents should be physically capable of joining the children in their activities and mentally alert to cope with the questioning mind.

For those supervising children from twelve years and up, the administrators were of the opinion that there should be an understanding of adolescent problems and proposed that those houseparents should be younger than the average. This age requires one with a tolerance of adolescent foibles; one who can appeal to grownup ideas, but who has a social ease with minors; one who can plan parties and understands the techniques of fostering constructive boy-girl relationships.

IV

Houseparents are inadequately trained because professional training is non-existent for the person entering the field of foster child care, and there are very limited opportunities to gain experience as a houseparent before coming to the position.

Even though formal training was not available to those preparing to become houseparents, only one-third of the administrators reported in-service training programs. The supervisory conference was rated as the most successful training activity by the administrators. A small number of the houseparents have participated in workshops, institutes for parents of pre-school blind children, correspondence courses, and lectures in connection with their in-service training.

Slightly less than 27 per cent of the houseparents credit themselves with enough training for the position. The majority of the remaining houseparents would welcome additional training during their leisure time. Although houseparents wish to improve their skills, one-third do not know how to proceed nor do their administrators generally provide training courses.

The houseparent has found that teaching experience and child rearing can be helpful in her present position. Since no formal houseparent training is available, she would like to enroll in child behavior, welfare, and psychology courses.

This study revealed that there are no well-defined programs for new staff orientation in the residential schools for the blind.

V

Since lines of communication between supervisors and houseparents are not clear cut and with limited contact between the institution and the home, the type of information available to the houseparent may have a direct bearing upon child care. An opinion expressed by one administrator that the houseparent must be professional in her attitude to have access to the records may explain the nature of the replies regarding the availability of pupil files. Although no records were accessible to the houseparents in 2 institutions, at 7 others all files were available and at 3 the files were interpreted to the houseparents. Parent correspondence was the most accessible in 30 residential schools in contrast to only medical reports available in one institution.

Discrepancies between the data indicate that many houseparents are not aware that the files are available for their use. According to the data, difficulties may arise in locating helpful information because 27 per cent of the houseparent informants work where there are no files available to them compared with 9 per cent of the houseparents who noted that all of the records are placed at their service. Consistently, houseparents listed parents' letters as their most frequent source of information.

In the opinion of 8 reporting houseparents, all the records regarding the children should be made accessible to them. To summarize the various combinations of records desired: 22 houseparents mentioned medical records or histories; 9 wanted summaries of cause, nature, and treatment of the handicapping condition; 8 would like social or field worker reports available and 8 listed psychiatric reports.

If the houseparents are to use the records regarding the youngsters, to what extent do the houseparents contribute to these records? Fourteen of the 36 administrators reported that houseparents make written reports of child behavior for the information of the staff, while another 9 indicated that the houseparents make the written reports upon request. In one institution, the psychologist recorded the results of the houseparent conferences. The houseparents, too, were asked if they were required to record their observations regarding the children. Of the replies, 42 per cent were expected to post their observations while 51 per ecnt were not. Two houseparents summarized records three times a year; and others posted observations two times a year; one, every six weeks. One housemother noted that she had a diary of her entries. Of the houseparents, 61 per cent had stated that their summaries about children were included in the home reports while the summaries of 27 per cent were not.

Because houseparents do not have access to sufficient information regarding the children placed under their care and do not record information about the behavior of their children, the communication between the child's home and the houseparent becomes increasingly important. The communication between the child's home and the residential school is usually ane way and limited. In most states the staff members seldom visit the home.

When the parents visit the child at the residential school, the houseparents are the most frequent representatives of the institution. According to the data, houseparents are the staff persons most often contacted by the children's parents in one-half of the institutions but it is also noted that in 8 per cent of the institutions the houseparent does not meet with the parent; in 19 per cent, the meeting is a rare occasion and 47 per cent the frequency of these contacts is variable.

Although the home and institutional relationships are deemed important, only one administrator reported an annual visit to each home and 11 per cent of the others noted that staff members do not visit the homes of their enrollees. The superintendents of 2 institutions reported that they visit the homes of the enrollees, while at the other schools those visits were distributed among various staff members. In one instance, the selection of the staff member to make the visitation is determined by the needs of the pupil.

It is estimated that in over one-third of the institutions, staff personnel visit less than 10 per cent of the children's homes annually, and this is done most frequently by either the administrator or the field social worker in more than half of the institutions.

VI

Although census-like information may contribute to a skeletal job description of the houseparents' position and the foregoing recommendations may direct attention toward improvement in the conditions of employment, a well-defined description includes an evaluation of the contributing skills and abilities required of the persons caring for the children. To clarify this area, houseparent co-workers and child care authorities evaluated selected items by rating each as to its contribution to the competency of houseparents. In their opinion, experience gained as domestics, domiciliary home attendants, and nurses aids offered a limited contribution toward houseparent skill, and evidence of such experience was

not observed among most of the houseparents.

In regard to the attitudes reflected by houseparents, 93 per cent of the respondents indicated that making each child secure through normal friendliness and respect for his rights made a significant contribution to houseparent competency although only half found this attitude in most of the houseparents. In the judgment of 89 per cent of the group, the houseparents should reflect cheerfulness, kindness, and encouragement which 61 per cent of the group found in most houseparents.

They contended that open-mindedness toward new developments is an important contribution to houseparent proficiency, but only 35 per cent were aware of this characteristic in most of the successful houseparents they had known. The houseparents should appreciate the values that each service has to offer in the total habilitation of handicapped children, because 75 per cent of the respondents considered this as a valuable contribution to houseparent competency, although less than half observed this characteristic in most houseparents. The same number found an attitude reflected by interest and outside activities towards handicapped youngsters in most of the houseparents, and 75 per cent of the group proposed that this item was a very great contribution to houseparent competency.

In the opinion of the respondents, those items describing interpersonal relationships were found to a lesser degree among successful houseparents. It was proposed that the houseparents should possess an inherent interest in children and adults, a warm, accepting personality, and calm confidence reflected by infinite patience in day-after-day work with children. The houseparent should also possess the ability to determine readiness of children for various levels of work, manners, and customs, and to help the child to grow or develop independence. She should possess concern for the personal worth of the individual, tolerance for the opinions of the group, and a friendly cooperative spirit towards others. Also the houseparent should have an average intelligence or better and should possess moral strength.

Understanding the needs for a consistent relationship with children was a significant contributor to houseparent skill in the consideration of 82 per cent of the group, although the characteristic had not been observed in most of the houseparents. The majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the understanding of the houseparent as a member of the professional team in the total institution approach was a very great contributor to houseparent proficiency, although not more than one-third had noticed such an approach by most of the houseparents.

Encouraging the child's self-help was rated as a skill conducive to houseparent competency and was observed in many of the successful houseparents. It was further proposed that houseparents should possess enough skill to discover the positives in children. She should possess the skill to design and modify dormitory programs to fit the individual needs of children and to provide opportunities for leisure-time activities at a pace corresponding to the physical, mental, social, and emotional growth of physically handicapped children. Although the majority of the respondents observed that most successful houseparents possess the skill to supervise children in groups or teams, only 58 per cent rated this as a great contributor to houseparent competency.

The respondents indicated that the houseparents should possess the ability to establish a secure emotional climate that allows the child to develop independently: to allow the child freedom and yet be able to firmly maintain social control. The houseparent should be able to accept children as they are, yet make a child feel wanted and understood, and convey to the

child that he is respected and can succeed. The houseparent should be able to establish and maintain effective relationships with children, to cope with minor discipline problems satisfactorily, and refer the unsolved problems to a specialist. The houseparent should be able to admit his own errors, remain open to suggestions, and yet develop a harmonious living plan in the unit. The houseparent should possess the ability to help children handle conflicts constructively and to cope with behavior problems which can be handled without the aid of specialists.

The responses revealed many characteristics which were considered important contributors to houseparent competency but were not recognized among the most successful houseparents. These discrepancies may offer clues to staff selection, further in-service training, and might delineate guide lines for further exploration as to the attitude, role, and position of the houseparent in the institution setting.

VII

At it becomes more apparent that academic achievement is not the only goal in the rehabilitation of the blind child, the need for these children to be supervised outside of the classroom by well-trained personnel becomes increasingly significant.

In view of the importance assigned the houseparents' contribution to the over-all adjustment and growth of blind children, the administrators recommended the following:

1. Houseparents should be between 25 and 65 years of age. This position should be filled by emotionally stable persons who are physically able to keep pace with the children under their supervision. The qualifications for the position should vary with the age of the children to be supervised.

2. Applicants should have had at least two years of training beyond high school with courses in either education, counseling, recreation, or social work in the field. Houseparent training programs should be provided that will orient new personnel and encourage professional growth. In-service training and inter-staff cooperation should be developed for houseparents. Staff meetings might be used for houseparent training purposes. Houseparents should attend staff meetings and be invited to case conferences and consultations with parents.

3. To recruit personnel with the recommended qualifications, houseparent salaries should be within the range paid teachers, nurses, or social workers.

4. In view of the trends to increase the number of men in the elementary school experience and the lack of men on the residential school staffs that contact the children directly, more housefathers should be employed.

5. To meet the demands of the position, the duty hours should be less than 50 hours a week, the number of children assigned to each group in the dormitory should approximate the same number assigned to each teacher, and the domestic tasks required of houseparents should be reduced to a minimum. If the houseparent is required to sleep in the dormitory on certain evenings, compensatory arrangements should be made in either time or salary to allow for this requirement.

6. More information concerning the children should be made available to the houseparents.

7. Houseparents should be given the poportunity to visit the homes of the children whenever possible. Two-way communication between the residential school and the home should be encouraged. Personal visits by staff members in the homes will help the staff work more closely with the parents in the habilitation of the children.

The majority of administrators proposed that the most successful houseparents were drawn from those applicants who had reared their own children.

This is a record of limitations still to be overcome and the report may serve as a bench mark to measure future progress in the houseparent profession.

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Achievement in Arithmetic Computation

Analysis of School Differences and Identification of Areas of Low Achievement

By Carson Y. Nolan, Ph.D., Director of Educational Research

American Printing House for the Blind

In his study of the curricula of residential schools for the blind, Quimby[6] noted the considerable differences among times allotted in the schools for the study of arithmetic. Such time differentials are quite possibly related to the achievement differences among schools which were earlier described by Hayes.[4] In the literature, such achievement problems have been explained as the result of the inherent difficulty of arithmetic computation for the blind [3, 4] and indicative of the need for emphasis within the curriculum upon arithmetic of practical use for the blind.[1, 3]

An earlier paper[5] described results of the use of a new Braille adaptation of the Arithmetic Computation Test of the Stanford Achievement Tests. These same data make possible an elementary analysis of differences in achievement between schools in this area as well as a tentative identification of types of problems for which achievement is low. Evaluation of the implications of these data for education of the blind in arithmetic computation is beyond the author's experience. However, it is hoped that description of the data and such elementary analyses as are presented may be of assistance to educators of the blind in evaluating their own programs.

Procedure

The Arithmetic Computation Test was administered to children attending nine residential schools for the blind. The Primary Level Test was taken by 77 children in grade 3.2; the Elementary Level Test by 70 children in grade 4.2; the Intermediate Level Test by 57 children in grade 6.2; and the Advanced Level Test by 78 children in grade 8.2. For a complete description of these tests and their previous use, the reader is referred to the earlier article by Nolan and Ashcroft.[5]

Differences Among Schools

Mean Achievement scores for the several schools are presented in Table I. Whether the differences between these means are the result of random sampling fluctuations or indicate real achievement differences can be answered through the

NOTE: Miss Angela Settle, Research Assistant, Department of Educational Research, assisted the author in scoring the tests and analyzing the data utilized in this study.

TABLE I

Mean Achievement Scores* at Each Test Level for Several Residential Schools for the Blind

SCHOOL	TEST LEVEL							
	PRIMARY (Grade 3.2)		ELEMENTARY (Grade 4.2)		INTERMEDIATE (Grade 6.2)		ADVANCED (Grade 8.2)	
	N	Mean**	N	Mean**	N	Mean**	N	Mean**
A	10	2.6	10	3.6	5	5.0	5	7.1
B	4	2.7	4	3.2	***		***	
C	7	2.2	9	3.5	6	5.2	4	9.7
D	5	2.6	7	3.8	8	5.9	6	8.3
E	16	2.9	13	4.0	10	5.7	8	8.3
F	7	1.9	8	2.2	7	4.4	12	5.3
G	10	2.6	9	3.5	10	4.1	14	7.0
H	9	2.1	5	3.3	6	4.2	***	
I	10	2.9	8	3.7	6	4.3	12	6.3

* Based on Total-Group Grade Norms.

** Difference between these means are statistically significant at the .01 level of confidence.

*** Schools having fewer than 4 pupils at any level were omitted.

technique of analysis of variance as described by Guilford.[2] For each test level the probability was far less than 1 in 100 that such differences could occur by chance alone. Therefore, we may conclude that real differences in achievement in arithmetic computation exist between the schools. Of interest also are the ranges of differences between children in the same grade. Children in grade 3.2 ranged in achievement from grade 1.9 to 2.9, those in grade 4.2 ranged in achievement from grade 2.2 to 4.0, children in grade 6.2 ranged from grade 4.1 to 5.9; and those in grade 8.2 ranged from grade 5.3 to 9.7.

Another question of interest is: Do schools who score high at one level score high at the others, or, conversely, do those who score low at one level score low at the other levels? Data for answering this question are presented in Table II. This table gives the rankings from high to low at each test level for the seven schools who had means available for all levels. If achievement levels are stable within schools as a result of local conditions, we would expect a school scoring high at any one level to score high on other levels, and schools scoring low at any one level to score low on the other test levels. Exami-

TABLE II

Comparison of Schools* for Stability of Differences over all Four Levels of the Test

TEST LEVEL	SCHOOL						
	A	C	D	E	F	G	I
	SCHOOL RANK						
Primary	4	6	3	1	7	5	2
Elementary	4	6	2	1	7	5	3
Intermediate	4	3	1	2	5	7	6
Advanced	4	1	2	3	7	5	6

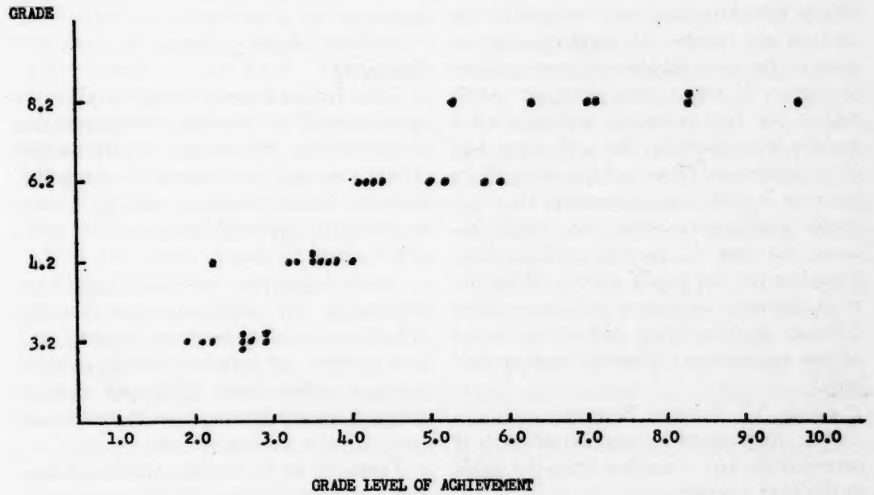
*Schools lacking means at any one level were omitted.

nation of Table II reveals that all but two schools do remain at approximately the same relative level of achievement. However, are these relationships statistically reliable? Analysis of the data using the Kruskal-Wallis Test[7] indicate the chances are less than 5 in 100 that the relative position of the schools for all levels are the result of chance. Therefore, we can say that schools do tend to retain the same relative position for all four levels of the test.

A third question—Does progress occur at the same rate within each school?—can be only tentatively answered from the present data. Evidence that it does not is presented in Figure 1. This figure graphically indicates the spread of the achievement means for the schools at each grade level. At grade 3.2 the achievement means are grouped closely together, indicating near common achievement for the schools. As you go up the grades, however, the spread of means becomes increasingly greater, demonstrating that some schools are progressing rapidly and that some are lagging. For example, comparison of means for grades 6.2 and 8.2 shows that achievement in some six grades surpasses that of one eighth grade.

Figure 1

COMPARISON OF SPREAD OF ACHIEVEMENT MEANS AT FOUR GRADE LEVELS



The above analyses reveal that real and sometimes considerable differences in achievement in arithmetic computation exist between the schools participating in this study. The *why* of these differences is not apparent from the data. It is suggested that these differences are the result of the interaction of a number of complex factors. These may include type of arithmetic instruction given, amount of time devoted to it, intellectual characteristics of student groups, policy concerning public

school attendance of blind children within a state, quality of instruction, and others. This list is not all-inclusive, nor may all these factors be operant within a given school. If these schools are taken as a representative sample of all such schools in our country, it appears that increased emphasis on arithmetic computation in some schools should be considered.

Arithmetic Areas of Low Achievement

Areas of low achievement (types of problems) were identified through examination of item difficulties. An item difficulty for this study was defined as the ratio of the number of pupils passing an item to the total number of pupils taking the test. If fewer than 40% of pupils taking the test answered problems of a specific type correctly, the arithmetic area is considered one of low achievement. Since the tests at each level cover more than one grade, pupils may score low simply because the material in that area is inappropriate for the pupils' grade. However, it is believed educators will have little difficulty in identifying such areas. Areas of low achievement identified were as follows:

1. Grade 3.2, Primary Battery:
   (a) Addition or subtraction where it is necessary to carry a number from the unit's to the ten's column
   (b) Addition or subtraction involving numbers of more than two digits
   (c) Addition of decimals
   (d) Any type multiplication
   (e) Any type division
2. Grade 4.2, Elementary Battery:
   (a) Addition of more than two numbers, when numbers with more than two digits are involved
   (b) Subtraction of numbers having more than two digits
   (c) Division and multiplication, when numbers of greater than one digit are involved
   (d) Any operation involving decimals
   (e) Fractions
3. Grade 6.2, Intermediate Battery:
   (a) Any operation involving fractions
   (b) Any operation involving decimals
   (c) Problems where units of measure (feet or pounds) are involved
   (d) Reading graphs that present more than one set of data
4. Grade 8.2, Advanced Battery:
   (a) Problems related to interest on investments
   (b) Reading graphs that present more than one set of data
   (c) Problems involving negative numbers
   (d) Algebraic problems

Summary

Data from an earlier study of a Braille adaptation of the Arithmetic Computation Tests of the STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TESTS were analyzed in order to study differences in achievement among schools and identify types of problems for which achievement is low.

It was found that statistically significant differences in arithmetic computation achievement exist between schools, and that schools are relatively stable in their levels of achievement. Different rates of progress in achievement in this area appear to exist among schools.

Types of problems for which achievement of blind children is low were tentatively identified.

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Physical Education Tests for Boys

By S. L. Haliczer, Physical Education Instructor

Illinois Braille and Sight Saving School

Through discussions with other physical educators, one can readily discover the mountains of material we have to share—especially true in the area of teaching the visually handicapped, since comparatively little published information is available. After several years at the Illinois Braille and Sight Saving School this writer can look upon a program that is the outgrowth of ideas from many sources, particularly other teachers of the blind. Conferences and clinics offer a great deal, but the "gab session" media offers knowledge through its informality and simplicity where valuables are exchanged that are put to use in our schools. Interest of many colleagues in two tests devised and used at the Illinois school are worthy of note by all.

Because of recent emphasis on the fitness of American youth, the effectiveness of our physical education program is being challenged. In the May 26, 1958 issue of *Sports Illustrated*, there were published the national averages for students in four common physical education activities. Of the four events, three are used in the tests that are to be described in this article. In making a comparison of the results attained by our visually handicapped students with the published results, it was discovered that over two-thirds of our group compared very favorably with the national averages. This indicator pointed to the values of physical education for the blind. The information needed to make the comparison are in the school records as a direct result of the tests used and provides additional proof that the visually handicapped student can and does measure up to his sighted peers.

Both tests evolved from the following:

1. Need to stimulate wholesome activity.
2. Need to motivate the students with interesting activities.
3. Need for a measuring instrument to point out physical growth.
4. Usefulness for both blind and partially sighted students.
5. Provision of a source for grading.
6. Easy and economical administration.

By and large each of the tests are very similar, as they follow a similar pattern. The "Decathalon," as we call the first of the tests, is a recent revision of a similar program used for many years at the Illinois School. It consists of a series of ten events, all performed indoors, making use of the facilities on hand and conducted during the regular class period. The second test is called the "Track and Field Achievement Test," performed outdoors, and consists of the eight events used in track and field competition of the North Central Association, also carried on during the regular class period.

The ten events that make up the Decathalon are:

1. Pull-ups (chinning)
2. Standing broad jump
3. Basket shooting (free throws)
4. Sit-ups
5. Medicine ball put
6. Squat jumps
7. Rope climb
8. Sargent jump (standing jump for height)
9. Push-ups
10. Rope skipping

The order of events may be varied; however, the above order is followed at the Illinois School enabling students to intersperse upper and lower body exercises, heavy and light activity, etc. These activi-

ties are enjoyed by all students and each provides for its own physical need. Few people see any joy in doing push-ups, chins, etc., although when an individual is in competition with himself and his friends, no further stimulation is required.

At the opening of each school year, all students are weighed and measured as a matter of record. These measurements are used along with age to classify the boys for participation in the two tests. An exponent system using the age, height, and weight factors places each boy in a competitive unit where he is homogeniously grouped. The classification system used divides the boys into five groups, Class "A" being the older, heavier, and taller students, while Class "E" is the opposite number. Theoretically each classification would have about the same number of participants, and it works out well even in our school with a small and limited enrollment. Actually almost any of the accepted methods of grouping lends itself readily to this testing form. Naturally it would be ideal if all of the schools for the visually handicapped would follow the same pattern, as it would grow into valuable and usable information for later study.

Letting the students know the class in which they will be competing is vital. After the groups are determined, the lists are posted in both Braille and large print or type. The boys find it interesting to know who is in their respective class, and it does a great deal in stimulating top performances. Emphasis is placed on competition with oneself, in bettering the past year's performance. Of course the students do compete with each other in their respective classes, because a ribbon award is given to the top three finalists in each group. After the first year of using the tests, the self-improvement phase became evident. The pupils were moved in this direction, as a point is made of giving the previous year's top performance, hence the student has a goal toward which to strive. This is done easily as the records are maintained on a cumulative scoring form.

The record form devised for use in the Decathalon is simple and easily followed as can be seen in the following sample:

DECATHALON

YEAR

CLASS

NAME_____

EVENT	1	2	3	Prs	1	2	3	Prs	1	2	3	Prs	1	2	3	Prs	1	2	3	Prs
Chinning																				
Broad Jump																				
Basket Shooting																				
Sit-Ups																				
Med. Ball Put																				
Squat Jumps																				
Rope Climb																				
Sargent Jump																				
Push Ups																				
Rope Skip																				
TOTAL																				

In the spaces marked year and class, the data posted is the school year, i.e., '58-'59, and the group in which the student is classified, i.e., A, B, C, D, or E, as determined by the exponent sytsem. The pupil's name is entered on the form, and the score sheet is ready to be used for five years. The events are listed and spaces are available to record the results of three trials. The points or score recorded is that number of points awarded for the best of the three attempts. For example, if a boy on his first attempt chins himself eight times and does less than eight on each of the following trials, he is scored on the basis of eight as that was his best performance.

The scoring system is relatively simple and easily understood by the students. All results are based upon a maximum of fifty (50) points which keeps the totals from getting out of hand. Hence, a total of five hundred points can be atained if the performer is good enough. It might be added that the scoring system is devised so that no one, unless he be a supreme exception, can score the maximum. There are events where many boys garner 50 points, and that is encouraging to both teacher and student. Briefly, here is the scoring system for each event and a few of the necessary restrictions governing the event.

1. Pull-ups (chinning)—2 points for each pull-up. Maximum of 25. If a student uses a body snap or swing, half credit is given.
2. Standard Broad Jump—A graded scoring system is used, i.e.
   10′ or over — 50 pts.
   9′4″ — 45
   6′0″ — 25
   3′10″ — 5
3. Basket Shooting—Total of fifteen shots in succession. Blind stand closer to basket than sighted. 3 points per shot if basket is made, 2 points if ball hits rim, and 1 point for hitting backboard. If a score of 40 or more is made, the boy is given a five-point bonus to coincide with the maximum.
4. Sit-ups—½ point each. Maximum of 100 for fifty points.
5. Medicine Ball Put—1 point per foot. Procedure followed is basically the same as used in putting the shot.
6. Squat Jumps—1 point each. Maximum of 50.
7. Rope Climb (20 ft.)—A graded scoring system is used.
   4.0 sec. — 50 pts.
   7.0 sec. — 43 pts.
   13.0 sec. — 28 pts.
8. Sargent Jump (or standing jump for height)—2 points per inch.
9. Push-ups—1 point each. Maximum of 50.
10. Rope Skipping—Time limit one minute. 1 point per four jumps.

This seems long and complicated; however, it is much simpler than it appears. The example that follows will demonstrate a hypothetical case showing one person's efforts with the best performance encircled and scoring for each event.

NAME_____

EVENT	1	2	3	Pts	1	2	3	1
Chinning	5	6	3	12				
Broad Jump	5′9″	(6′1″)	5′11″	26				
Basket Shooting	(39)	30	35	39				
Sit-Ups	(100)	—	—	50				
Med. Ball Put	21′	(24′)	23′	24				
Squat Jumps	(50)	—	—	50				
Rope Climb	9.8	(9.2)	9.8	38				
Sargent Jump	(16″)	14″	15″	32				
Push Ups	38	32	(40)	40				
Rope Skip	180	(200)	180	50				
TOTAL								
				361				

If the above example were a student in Class A, the score would be considered only fair; if in Class B, good; and excellent for Class C. A youngster in the D and E groups could not possibly attain such a high score; hence for grading purposes a graduated scale must be used and can be arranged for final marks or consideration of class grades.

At various times throughout the test, the totals accumulated to that point are posted and announced. Making the scores known after the fourth and eighth events are completed provides a stimulant for the student to try harder in the events to follow, particularly if the pupil is leading the class, running a close score to a buddy, or trying to improve his score over that of the previous year.

The Decathalon is a rapid-moving program and takes a relatively short time to conduct. Naturally, this would vary with each school, number and length of class meetings. As many as four events can be administered in a day if desired. The self-testing element offers opportunities for the pupils to help and contribute to their own development. Class leaders can be used in administering the test, thus enriching the program for the child.

The final results of the Decathalon have been most enlightening as mentioned earlier. Comparions have been made to determine how the visually handicapped students at different age levels measure up to national norms and averages. A complete analysis would be too numerous to illustrate at this time; however, here are just a few items for students fourteen years of age:

	National Average	IBSSS Average
Pull-up (chinning)	4	4
Push-up	14	19

A like relationship would be found in all age groups and in almost all events. The above illustration depicts the average for both blind and partially sighted boys at the Illinois school.

No event in the Decathalon favors either sighted or blind students to any degree of significance. A critical analysis of some events would inidicate the student with vision may have a slight edge, which is true in any and all activities. The final results prove that the blind do as well as the sighted as shown by the past year's group winners. Of the top three boys in each of the five classes (total of 15 boys), seven were totally blind, one boy had very limited vision (Braille student), and seven were sightsavers. This trend holds true in the three previous years; hence one must conclude that the events and Decathalon test as a whole is geared to fit all of our students, not a select few.

The Track and Field Achievement Test is conducted in exactly the same manner as the Decathalon. Classification is no problem as the groups remain the same for both tests. The track test is conducted outdoors, and a graduated scoring scale is followed for each of the eight events.

The eight events that make up the Track and Field Achievement Test are listed and graded in the same manner and on the same type Form as the sample shown for the Decathalon, for the following events: Fifty-yard dash, seventy-five-yard dash, Hop-step-jump, Basketball throw, Shot-put, High Jump, Three Jumps, and Broad Jump.

A graded point scale is used for all of the track and field events, such as used for the broad jump and rope climb in the Decathalon. Again, the scoring system is based upon the fifty-point maximum and graded down to include even the youngest performers.

Only one modification is made in administering this test—for students below the seventh grade an eight-pound shot is used rather than the twelve.

The final outcome of this test is equally as significant as the results of the Decatha-

lon. The students compare favorably with their sighted buddies. Having a small group, as is common in our schools, average figures become somewhat distorted, i.e., a boy who is physically, as well as visually, handicapped hampers the picture since the group is limited. Comparisons made on an individual basis are not difficult; however, they are time-consuming. It does show where a student lies in relationship to his peers, and, with the teacher's knowledge of the youngster, an estimate of his potential is possible. Here are four examples of this individual comparison:

		50 Yd. Dash		Standing Broad Jump	
Name	Age	National Average	Individual Score	National Average	Individual Score
Gene Coe	16	6.8 sec.	6.7 sec.	6'7"	8'3"
Stan Mann	14	7.5 sec.	8.5 sec.	5'10"	6'1"
Lem Hill	13	7.8 sec.	7.4 sec.	5'5"	6'11"
Emil Doe	12	8.2 sec.	8.6 sec.	5'0"	5'10"

In the above illustration the first and third boys are totally blind, whereas the second and fourth are sighted. This writer was fascinated by the fine results of the students at the Illinois School and feels certain that the over-all picture formed by the results in all of the schools for the visually handicapped would further exemplify these records.

Perhaps more important than comparison with normally sighted students' results is the fact that in the two tests described we have suitable physical education instruments with which to work. Providing a program that will interest the greatest majority of our students, and provide for their physical needs, can be considered the most important phase of our program. The Decathalon and the Track and Field Achievement Test are presented to meet the fundamental aims and objectives of our program.

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Dates to Remember

1959

May 24-29—National Association of Social Workers, meeting in conjunction with the National Conference on Social Welfare, San Francisco, California.

June 28-July 3—National Education Association, Annual Convention, St. Louis, Missouri.

July 5-10—American Association of Workers for the Blind, Annual Convention, Hotel Statler, Detroit, Michigan.

July 22-31—World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, Second World Assembly, Rome, Italy.

National Committee for the Deaf-Blind Children

A Report

By Roy M. Stelle, Superintendent

Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind

The Executive Board of the National Committee for the Deaf-Blind Children met in executive session at Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, Massachusetts on October 4, 1958. This group had its origin in 1953, when a group of interested people gathered for the purpose of discussing the work of the schools offering training to deaf-blind children. This group has continued to meet at intervals since that time. In the beginning it was merely a group of people interested in the deaf-blind child. At the present time, however, the membership is more formalized and the committee consists of the following:

1. The administrative head of each school in the United States offering instruction to deaf-blind children.
2. Two members appointed by the Conference of Executives of American Schools for the Deaf.
3. Two members appointed by the American Association of Instructors of the Blind.
4. One representative from the American Foundation for the Blind.

This Committee, through the years, has tried to stimulate interest in children with the double handicap of blindness and deafness in order that a better service might be furnished throughout the United States. When the Committee had its first meeting, there were approximately 45 children enrolled in the six deaf-blind departments in existence at that time. Since that time the number of departments has increased to eight, and the total enrollment at the present time is 76.

The American Foundation for the Blind has had two full-time staff members working in the field of the deaf-blind. A continuing census of deaf-blind in the United States indicates the following population for 1958.

1. Enrolled in deaf-blind departments in schools for the blind and the deaf in the U.S.A.	76
2. Now living in institutions for mentally deficient	64
3. Receiving some training through nursery, tutors, etc.	12
4. Living at home (ages 0-20)	113
Total	265

In addition to the figures given above, the American Foundation for the Blind has a list of 80 children who are under investigation but who have not been classified.

The meeting in Watertown consisted largely of reports and papers. Discussions were quite exhaustive, following each paper or report. It would be impossible to go into these in detail but I will try to summarize them as well as possible. Miss Betty Riley, Field Worker, Services for the Deaf-Blind, American Foundation for the Blind, presented a brief study of the present enrollments in the various Departments of the Deaf-Blind, and other statistics relative to the register of the known deaf-blind children in the United States. Mr. Paul Mitchell presented the findings of a survey he made concerning the training, experience, and tenure of our 49 teachers of the deaf-blind presently teaching. A motion was passed that Mr. Mitchell should make

another similar study to be presented at the next meeting of the National Committee.

Following a discussion of practices of training and recruitment for teacher personnel, a motion was passed that the Perkins School for the Blind be urged to consider the making of a sound movie for educational purposes, which would include portions, at least, of the education of the deaf-blind. The purpose of the movie is to encourage and interest others in the teaching in the department for the deaf-blind.

Mr. Daniel Burns, Director of the Deaf-Blind Department at Perkins School for the Blind, presented an analysis of the work which has been completed by Dr. Myklebust of Northwestern University at Perkins School for the Blind. This work has been done over a period of five years, and it is hoped that the procedures that have been worked out will be useful and adequate in evaluation of young deaf-blind children. Miss Annette B. Dinsmore, Director of the Services for the Deaf-Blind, American Foundation for the Blind, reported on the workshop held at Syracuse University in the summer of 1958, and on the developments and training of the Preschool Deaf-Blind Child.

A report was heard from M. Thomas Svob concerning the problems and accomplishments of the new department for the deaf-blind which has been started at the Illinois Braille and Sight-Saving School at Jacksonville, Illinois. This was followed by a discussion of the problems for the Department of the Michigan School for the Blind, which resulted in the following motion: "The National Committee strongly endorses the expansion of the Department for Deaf-blind children at the Michigan State School for the Blind to provide for the inclusion of children from other states and to include a teacher-training program."

Dr. Hugo Schunhoff, Superintendent of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, presented a progress report of the Committee on Certification of Teachers of the Deaf-Blind as authorized by the Conference of Executives of American Schools for the Deaf and the American Association of Instructors of the Blind. His report included this recommendation: "That the American Association of Instructors of the Blind and the Conference of Executives of American Schools for the Deaf ask the National Committee on the Deaf-Blind to accept the responsibility of approving training centers for teachers of the deaf-blind and certifying teachers of the deaf-blind with the understanding that both the American Association of Instructors of the Blind and the Conference of Executives of American Schools for the Deaf will continue to be represented officially within the membership of the Executive Board of the National Committee on the Deaf-Blind, and with the recommendation that any sub-committee selected by that Committee for this purpose be so constituted that both organizations are represented." Upon motion, this recommendation was approved by the Committee.

A discussion followed concerning the value of and the future possibilities of the National Committee for the Deaf-Blind. It was felt that the committee was accomplishing much in the way of improved facilities for the education of the deaf-blind children and a motion was passed, stating: "We should recognize the increasing need for this Committee and its operations and we should urge the American Foundation for the Blind to continue to use its influence to assist in providing the needs of this Committee by furnishing necessary transportation and other services from its personnel."

It was also recommended that a small brochure be distributed to strategic points, which should inform the public of where and how deaf-blind children might be given educational opportunities. A motion was adopted recommending that: "The

American Foundation for the Blind be asked to consider the possibility of preparing a brochure for the promotion and publicizing of the facilities and opportunities available for the education of the deaf-blind, and also of the work of the Executive Board of the National Committee for Deaf-Blind Children."

There was some discussion concerning the present status of former students of the various departments of deaf-blind children. A motion was passed as follows: "Dr. Waterhouse should make a study of the former students of the various programs of education for the deaf-blind to shed some light on the degree of effectiveness of this program in general."

The present officers of the Executive Committee were reelected, namely:

Egbert N. Peeler, Chairman
Hugo F. Schunhoff, Vice-Chairman
Berthold Lowenfeld, Secretary

Although not reflected directly in the motions and reports that have been cited above, it was the feeling of this Committee that all educable deaf-blind children should be taught in schools that have well-equipped departments for this purpose. It was felt that there should be a minimum of from eight to twelve children to operate a successful department and that this number of children should have a minimum of four teachers and staff members.

The National Committee strongly urges that schools for the blind and the deaf in the United States refrain from admitting deaf-blind children to be taught by such procedures as may be available to blind or deaf children. The teaching of deaf-blind children is a specialized job, requiring special materials and special teaching skills. It is felt that there are enough deaf-blind departments in operation in the United States at the present time to care for more children than are currently enrolled and that it would be best for all states to send their children to these departments on a tuition basis than to open small deaf-blind departments which would probably be operated inefficiently.

All superintendents of schools for the blind are urged to lend assistance, whenever possible, in getting a deaf-blind child properly enrolled, if educable, in one of the proper departments. Superintendents are urged to get in touch with a member of the Executive Board of the National Committee for the Deaf-Blind, or with one of the eight schools operating departments for the deaf-blind, or communicate with the American Foundation for the Blind, when assistance is needed.

The Executive Board of the National Committee passed a resolution to thank Perkins School for the Blind, through Dr. Waterhouse, who was present, for the gracious hospitality and conveniences given the Committee during this meeting period. It was also pleased to express its appreciation to those who were a part of the program and to the American Foundation for the Blind, which assisted with some necessary transportation aid, as well as with its personnel, since the last meeting of the Committee.

The writer participated as a representative of the American Association of Instructors of the Blind on this Committee.

The Status of Piano Technology

By S. B. Durfee, Instructor, Tuning Department

Perkins School for the Blind

Someone is likely to say, "Why piano technology? I thought a man who tuned, worked on pianos, or rendered any form of service, was a piano tuner?" Indeed he is, but tuning is only one phase, or operation, involved in the field of piano service. To be sure, it is an important factor in the care of pianos, for, if we have learned to tune properly, we can lay the foundation on which the musician performs his music. Therefore, to tune correctly, the piano technician must have some knowledge of physics and sonics, and he must know in some degree the relations of string vibrations in terms of cycles per second. For instance, many people who do not tune are aware that an octave is obtained by halving or doubling the frequency of a given note. An octave below A-440 will vibrate at a rate of 220 cycles per second, while an octave above A-440 will have a rate of 880 c.p.s. But the lay person would not be expected to know much about the vibrations contained in various intervals which are of shorter or longer distances than the octave. Thirds, fourths, fifths, and sixths are intervals commonly used in laying a bearing or setting which is known as an equal temperament. This formula, using intervals to measure for proper tuning of semi-tones, is left to the piano technician to be worked out and practiced. Further reference will be made to this branch of study under the subject of *tempering* intervals. From this brief technical preview, one can readily appreciate our amusement when people say, "What are you doing Mister, just tightening up the wires?"

There are two other important operations connected with servicing pianos. These are: keyboard and action regulation; and general repairs. A good portion of our repair work is easily comprehended by the piano-owning public because damage to pianos is so self-evident. A broken hammer shank, a broken string, or a missing part of the piano involve no difficult explanation. Thus we must be aware that tuners who do not see should take extra care to do their work well, perhaps better than their sighted competitors.

On the other hand, the regulation of the keyboard and action is a more intangible type of work. A piano action may be playable and still may not be properly regulated. It is usable, but it shows a lack of something because it does not give its owner what he or she desires. In other words, it is not playing with the ease that is expected from such a fine instrument when accurately regulated. Consequently, we are likely to hear, "This action is too heavy." "This touch is too light." "My piano does not feel right." Even though a performer may not be aware that his piano has gone out of regulation due to shrinkage or swelling of the wooden parts, he will certainly notice a great difference and comment on it after the action has been properly adjusted.

Within the past seven years, many modern appliances have been invented by blind men engaged in this profession, designed to make our regulating and repair work much easier to accomplish. Also, through the use of these new tools, the final results are much better. I certainly recommend that every school for the blind in the country, where piano tuning is taught, be equipped with these modern appliances.

What about this matter of teaching tuning in schools for the blind? In connection with this question let's play a little

game of True or False.

1. Is piano servicing still a practical vocation for blind people? True. The growth and possibilities of the electronic piano will create no stumbling block for blind persons. They can learn to regulate them without danger of receiving electric shocks. The electric piano of today is not intended to displace the old conventional type, and I believe it never will. Its demand arises from its light construction which enables it to be taken into summer camps, or to places where a large piano could not be transported.

2. Is is true that the output of the conventional piano is holding its own? True. If anyone doubts that the manufacture and sale of pianos is still going strong, let him visit one of the annual conventions of the National Association of Music Merchants, held in New York or Chicago. Here we find not only volumes of pianos made in this country, but many foreign makes also.

3. Is it true that the public has lost interest in making its own music? False. Examine reports from the National Music Conferences all over our country, and you still find interest—interest in public school classes, and among many who continue with private lessons. At the Perkins School for the Blind we maintain a contract with the city of Boston for the tuning of all the pianos in their schools. This work is done by our former students and was originally started to let the public know what our men could do. This contract did not pay the salaries of the men employed; therefore we maintain a private clientele and advertise in the Boston Telephone directory. We tell folks to give us a call, and I wish you could hear this phone and observe the volume of business we do with little advertising effffort. There is great demand today for competent piano servicemen who can deliver the goods. We may rest assured that the volume of business does far outweigh the present number of well-trained technicians.

The methods of teaching piano service to blind pupils do not differ greatly from those employed in instructing sighted men. There are one or two exceptions which should be pointed out at this time. Instead of using blackboards and blueprints, the students use one-note action models. These models consist of a single complete unit, or section of the piano action. It has a key, a hammer, and a damper. This enables the student to observe the working parts, and to learn how to remove and replace them before he attempts to work on a full sized action with its eighty-eight keys and actions. It should also be mentioned here that gluing is often a problem for the pupil without sight. One of the best ways of coping with this is to have the student apply the glue to the desired object, using one finger as a glue stick. Then he knows how much glue he is getting, and where it is being placed. Sighted girls in piano factories when gluing on felt and other action parts use the *finger* glue applicator.

The process of teaching tuning is conducted in reverse manner from that of tuning the piano when the student has completed his course. In other words, we teach the pupil to sew on buttons before he learns to cut the cloth and stitch the garment. The reason for this inverted approach deals with the problem of our training. When we strike a note on the piano, the hammer actuates a group of three strings. This is true except in the bass where there are only two strings to a note except the lowest ten notes which are comprised of large single strings. The two and three stringed notes must be tuned to beat in smooth unison. This is one of the first stunts given the new student. After he has gained a good sense of listening for the beats, and can control the tuning-in satisfactorily, he is taught to tune octaves.

Then follows the instruction in tempera-

ment. By tempering intervals, the pupil learns to divide the notes contained in an octave into twelve semi-tones. It would be impossible to obtain accuracy by trying to tune the notes within an octave a half step at a time. No human ear is capable of producing an octave by tuning up the scale chromatically. However, by using a series of different intervals as a yardstick, we can measure the distance between the different tones, and thus arrive at an equal distribution of intervals.

At the 1958 convention of the AAIB held in Vancouver, Washington, many of us had an opportunity to visit and learn about the piano hospital and training center, operated by Mr. Emil B. Fries. Instructors, technicians, and students in the field of piano service owe a great deal to Mr. Fries, who established this fine vocational training center.

Dr. Robert H. Thompson, Superintendent of the Michigan School for the Blind, and former President of the AAIB, appointed a committee to investigate this field of piano technology. They are checking the advantages of training blind students in this type of work, its possibilities as a profession, and the best means of providing vocational training. All the schools for the blind in which no instruction in piano servicing is given at present are likely to hear from this piano-minded committee soon. One important point stressed by the tuning instructors in our workshop at Vancouver should be mentioned here. It was the unanimous opinion of the instructors present that most of our boys need one additional year of intensive training after finishing high school to make them proficient in handling the problems which arise with the proper care of pianos. Pupils graduate from high school today at an early age, and this would give them a chance to become more mature before facing conditions in the business world. However, the training given pupils in this field during their high school years in indeed valuable. Even though they may never use it as a vocation, this training in handling delicate piano actions will aid them to achieve success in other types of vocational work. If we can facilitate the student's training in any type of work, regardless of what occupation he prefers, our efforts are not in vain. Here's hoping that many of our students will become interested in the piano service field and gain economic independence as well as social standing and respect in their community.

In most any form of training, be it academic or for industrial employment, additional courses are given after the completion of high school. We should certainly have such advanced training in piano technology.

A Survey of the Facilities for the Mentally Retarded-Blind in the United States

By Peter C. Paraskeva, Teacher of Special Class
Milford, Connecticut

Within the last five years interest has again been focused upon the education of children who are mentally retarded-blind. The initial spark of interest came from England, approximately fifty years ago, through an attempt to estimate the frequency of retardation among the blind population there. During this span of

forty-five years, little research has been done concerning the education and social adjustment of this particular child.

Although the residential schools for the education of the blind have not been alone in their awareness of this problem, their challenge has become particularly evident. Many of these individual differences have become more significant with the advancement of growth from pre-school classes to the more obivous deviation occuring in the middle and upper grades of their educational experiences. At this time, the existing facilities become fruitless for these children, especially where no apparent consideration is given to their educational or vocational needs.

In an attempt to respond to this challenge, the following survey of the residential schools in the United States and Hawaii has been made. The specific aim of the study was to compile informative data concerning the facilities available for the mentally retarded (Educable I.Q. 50-75)-Blind (children with 20/200 in the better eye with maximum correction). An estimation of the school population, with emphasis on those immediately effected, will also be given. Specific emphasis will be placed on the educational, vocational, and guidance programs as reported from these schools.

The design of the study proceded in the following manner:

1. A list of the residential schools in the United States with facilities for the visually handicapped was compiled from that of the American Foundation for the Blind, New York, New York.

2. The content of the questionnaire included the acceptance of this particular doubly handicapped child into the residential school. Emphasis was placed on securing information concerning the educational, vocational and guidance services in existence, as well as future plans for organization. The philosophical aspects of such a program were also polled, in addition to the percentile population presently in attendance at school. Inquiry was made into the procedure upon graduating (diplima or certificate) and placement into employment.

3. Organization of the results according to response included a 60 per cent response from the residential schools througout the United States and Hawaii. These were tabulated in regard to the items involved, conveying a view of facilities in effect through the spring of 1958.

Results

In reply to the questionnaire from the 46 letters sent there were 29 responses. This is more than 60 per cent response.

Three major factors which have inhibited responses as reported have been: (1) Discontinuation of the school's program, (2) a school policy not to respond to questionnaires, and (3) postponement due to school testing.

In the questionnaire chart we may view the trend according to the responses. In response to the first question you will notice that 90 per cent of these schools have accepted these particular children into their respective schools. Five per cent of this group gave a qualified affirmative response, that is, they do have these children in their schools at present but do not formally make a rule of accepting them. Another 5 per cent gave an unqualified "no" response; however, one of these might also be regarded as a qualified answer because they do claim to have some students at the present time. Discussion as to the significance will be discussed at the conclusion of the survey.

For the second question the responses were "yes" — 59 per cent, "no" — 31 per cent, "some" — 10 per cent. The last group concerns those that claim that some other institution or school occasionally accepts them.

The third part of the questionnaire was responded to in the following manner.

"Yes" — 17 per cent, "no" — 74 per cent, "not necessarily" —10 per cent. The last qualify their statements because, if the child can progress, they will leave him in the institution that is most rewarding.

The percentage of schools that have a special class for these children is 48 per cent. The average number of classes is one. Names given the classes vary from "opportunity," "adjustment," "exceptional," etc.

The number of schools that have an occupational education program with those mentioned goals is 23 per cent. The number of schools that have just a vocational program without the specific core of occupational education are 22 per cent. Those schools that do not have this program at all are 45 per cent.

Questionnaire

The following questions are concerned with the goal of determining the facilities that are now available for the blind-mentally retarded children in the residential schools throughout the United States. The responding statements to these questions should be "yes" or "no" unless another type of response is indicated. The remarks to the corresponding questions should be recorded in the blanks provided after each item.

1. Are children with mental retardation (educable 50-75), as well as the visual handicap, accepted into your particular school?
Yes 90% No 5% Not formally accepted 5%

2. Are children with a visual handicap (children with 20/200 in the better eye with maximum corerction) accepted into institutions for the mentally retarded (educable—I.Q. 50-75), in your particular state?
Yes 59% No 31% Some 10%

3. Is there any legislation within your state that would prohibit a child who is diagnosed as being blind and mentally retarded (educable—I.Q. 50-75), from participating in the educational facilities provided in your school?
Yes 17% No 73% Not necessarily 10%

4. Is there a special class or a class with any other name that is set aside for the specific purpose and practice of educating blind-mentally retarded (educable-I.Q. 50-75), in your school?
Yes 48% No 45% Varies 7%
If so how many classes? *Average 1* Name them *Opportunity, Special Class, Orientation, Adjustment, Exceptional, Intermin., Ungraded*

5. Is there an occupational education program within your school that would specifically train the children that are multiply handicapped in the manner as previously defined: with the goal being to obtain and to hold a job?
Yes 23% No 45% Vocational Program 22%

6. Would your school be interested in establishing a program for these children (blind-mentally retarded-educable 50-75), At this time? *20%* In the future? *70%* Not at all *10%*

7. Does your school receive any reimbursement or financial supplement from the particular state: specifically for children who are mentally retarded, as well as visually handicapped? *Yes 8%. No 92%.*

8. How many children are attending classes at your school? *Average 153.* What per cent of this group would you estimate as being blind-mentally retarded (educable I.Q. 50-75)? *Average 18%.*

9. Does your school have a special education program, at this time, for educating children who are blind (those with an I.Q. of 75-90); including a practical vocational and guidance program? *Yes 42% No 36% Other program 22%.*

10. What does your school offer the mentally retarded-blind children who have participated in a special program, (blind-mentally retarded, educable 50-75) upon graduation from your residential school? *Certificate 31%, Nothing 48%, Something 21% (Diploma, Certificate).*

The percentage of schools that would like to establish a program at the present is 20 per cent. The number that would like to in the future — 70 per cent. The per cent that show no desire to establish a program for these children — 10 per cent.

The schools that receive a reimbursement from the state is aproximately 8 per cent. Ninety-two per cent do not receive an extra financial assistance from the state.

The average number of children at the residential school for the blind is 153. The percentage of blind mentally retarded is more than 15 per cent.

The per cent of schools having special education programs for slow learners is 42. The per cent of those schools that do not offer a special class for these children is 58 per cent. If you consider the general

education program, there are 22 per cent participating schools.

The percentage of those that give out certificates upon graduation is 31 per cent. Those schools that do not give anything to these children upon leaving, therefore do not give out anything to them, are 48 per cent. Twenty-one per cent make other kinds of graduation plans including vocational, rehabilitation, etc.

In response to the chart shown with this survey we can observe the difference in percentage of these mentally retarded-blind children in comparison with the numbers. There seemed to be little consistency in population trend as demonstrated with the Overbrook School where there are 325 blind children, but only 5 per cent of these are mentally retarded. At the same time there are 194 children at the Western Pennsylvania School for Blind Children, but this percentage is 14 per cent — greater than the former.

One need not be surprised as they notice the population of 40 children at Royer-Greaves School for the Blind and realize that this school will accept only the mentally retarded-blind. Therefore, they have a 100 per cent for this group.

The New York Institute for the Education of the Blind has reported the greatest percentage of mentally retarded of any other in this survey (aside from Royer-Greaves).

Arkansas (School for Deaf and Blind) and Diamond Head School (in Hawaii) report that they do not have mentally retarded children at their school. They report that at present they have no need for instituting any kind of a program for these cihldren, although both of these schools do have a program for the slow-learner (I.Q. 75-90). Arkansas has a complete program for this child. Hawaii claims a modified program has been established there.

It is also significant, however, to note that few schools that have stated that they do not admit this doubly handicapped child into their school have reported a large group in their census.

Responses

Residential Schools in the U.S.A.	*Number of Children*	*Per Cent Retarded*
1. Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind	186	10-15
2. Arizona State School for the Deaf and Blind	90	11
3. Arkansas School for the Blind	135	5
4. Arkansas School for the Blind and Deaf (colored)	30	None
5. California School for the Blind	150	20
6. Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind	84	14
7. Diamond Head School, Honolulu, Hawaii	?	None
8. Florida School for the Deaf and Blind	170	3
9. Georgia Academy for the Blind	205	?
10. Iowa Braille and Sight-Saving School	158	10
11. Indiana School for the Blind	128	10
12. Kentucky School for the Blind	?	?
13. Maryland School for the Blind	200	10
14. Mississippi School for the Blind	150	10
15. Missouri School for the Blind	187	11
16. New Mexico School for the Blind	110	10
17. New York Institute for the Education of the Blind	220	30-40
18. North Carolina School for the Blind and Deaf	346	5-10
19. North Dakota School for the Blind	24	25
20. Ohio State School for the Blind	210	8
21. Oklahoma School for the Blind	81	25
22. Oregon State School for the Blind	84	7
23. Overbrook School for the Blind	325	5
24. Royer-Greaves School for the Blind	45	75 (Educable as other)
25. Tennessee School for the Blind	220	10-20
26. Utah School for the Deaf and Blind	40	25
27. Washington State School for the Blind	103	5-10
28. Western Pennsylvania		

School for Blind Children	194	14
29. West Virginia School for the Blind	112	10-12

Conclusions

1. There are many residential school in the United States that have accepted children with mental retardation (educable 50-75), as well as the visual handicap. (90 per cent of polled residential schools).

2. There are few residential schools throughout the United States who have not expressed the need to establish a program for these children, at the present time, or in the future.

3. Approximately 15 per cent of the average residential schools for the visually handicapped in the United States with 150 students are doubly handicapped in this particular manner.

4. There are more institutions for the mentally retarded throughout the United States that would accept visually handicapped students than those that will not, as reported according to institutions in each particular state polled.

5. In general, there are few state schools that prohibit the acceptance of mentally retarded, according to law (17 per cent of residential schools polled).

6. Less than half of the residential schools have reported that they do not have any special classes at this time.

7. The great majority of these schools do not receive any reimbursement from their state for accepting this particular doubly handicapped child.

8. The majority of these schools have reported no occupational educational program as such: a few have reported handicraft, home economics, arts and crafts (latter percentage 22 per cent some other program).

9. More residential schools for the blind have a program for the slow learner (I.Q. 75-90) and less have a program other than a special class program for these children.

10. The majority of these schools do not offer anything upon graduation for the mentally retarded educable (I.Q. 50-75) blind child. A few offer certificates; and fewer usually refer to Vocational Rehabilitation offices.

Summer 1959 Courses on Education of the Blind

In addition to the listings of 1959 summer courses on the education of the blind published on pages 102-103 of the March, 1959, issue of *The Journal*, we have been advised of the following additional course:

Portland State College, Portland, Oregon

June 22 - July 31 — Full summer sequence of courses for teachers of blind children.

For further information, write: Dr. James C. Caughlin, Director, Portland Summer Session, Portland State College, 1633 S.W. Park Avenue, Portland 1, Oregon.

1959-1960 Courses on Education of the Blind

Hunter College of New York City, New York, New York

September 21, 1959 - January 21, 1960—First Semester.

February 8 - June 3, 1960—Second Semester.

Courses specific to the curriculum for teachers of the visually handicapped: Methods of teaching for sight conservation; Anatomy, physiology and hygiene of the eye in relation to sight conservation classes; Theory and technique of reading and writing Standard English Braille, Grade II; Observation and student teaching of the physically handicapped —area of the blind; Principles and methods of teaching the blind. Related courses in: Research; Guidance; Psychology.

For further information, write: Dr. Elena D. Gall, Coordinator, Special Education, Hunter College of the City of New York, 695 Park Avenue, New York 21, New York.

Illniois State Normal University, Normal, Illinois

September 14, 1959 - January 29, 1960—First Semester.

February 1 - June 11, 1960—Second Semester.

Courses specific to the curriculum for teachers of the blind: Braille reading and writing, Education of the blind, Psychological problems of blindness, Student teaching with blind children. Related courses of interest to persons preparing to teach the blind: Psychology of the exceptional child, Introduction to special education, Related courses in psychology and education.

For further information, write: Mr. Harold R. Phelps, Director, Division of Special Education, Illinois State Normal University, Normal, Illinois.

Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan

September 25, 1959 - June 5, 1960.

Courses specific to the curriculum for teachers of the blind: Teaching of children in special education classes; Braille; Education for the blind; Physiology of the organs of vision and hearing.

For further information, write: Director of Special Education, College of Education, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.

George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee

September 21 - December 18, 1959—Fall Quarter.

January 4 - March 11, 1960—Winter Quarter.

March 15 - May 28, 1960—Spring Quarter.

June 7 - August 13, 1960—Summer Quarter (full term)*:

1st Term, June 7 - July 10.

Midsummer Term, June 21 - July 23.

2nd Term, July 12 - August 13.

Full sequence of courses leading to a Master's degree, a Specialist in Education degree (one year beyond the Master's), and a Doctor's degree in the education of visually handicapped children. Teachers can obtain certification and degree requirements in three quarters of full-time study. Five full-time scholarships of $2,000 each are available.

*Summer school will be in session during the time of the 1960 AAIB Convention in Nashville, and some special arrangements for course credit are planned.

For further information, write: Mr. S. C. Ashcroft, Coordinator of Training for Teachers of Visually Handicapped Children, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville 5, Tennessee.

Perkins School for the Blind, Watertown, Massachusetts (in cooperation with Boston University)

Courses on Education of the Blind

September 8, 1959 - June 4, 1960 (2 semesters).

Full sequence of courses in the teaching of the blind: Historical background of the education of the blind; Psychological implications of blindness; Structure and diseases of the eye; Reading and writing of Braille and special methods in teaching at all levels; Apprentice experience in: Observation of classes; Student teaching; Tutoring; Participation in the extra-curricular program. 12 graduate credits are granted by Boston University. All who complete the year's program receive the Perkins Diploma. Additional subjects in special education may be taken at Boston University towards completion of graduate requirements for Master's or Doctorate degrees.

Liberal scholarships, including full maintenance for an academic year of residence at Perkins School for the Blind, are available. Candidates must be college graduates and preference in granting scholarships is given to persons *with* sight.

For further information, write: Dr. Edward J. Waterhouse, Director, Perkins School for the Blind, Watertown 72, Massachusetts.

Perkins School for the Blind *(Cont.)*

Courses on Education of the Deaf-Blind

September 8, 1959 - June 4, 1960 (2 semesters).

Courses specific to the curriculum for teachers of the deaf-blind: Student teaching in special education; Hearing and deafness; Education of the exceptional child; Science of speech; Methods of teaching the deaf and the deaf-blind; Seminar in education for the exceptional child; Teaching of speech to the deaf and the deaf-blind, with emphasis on the vibration method; Teaching of language to the deaf and deaf-blind; Speech-reading and auditory training.

Credits earned in the program lead to a Master's degree in Special Education or a Doctor's degree in Special Education. Graduates who complete the above courses are eligible for the Perkins Diploma for Teachers of the Deaf-Blind.

Liberal scholarships, including tuition at Boston University and full maintenance for an academic year of residence at Perkins School for the Blind, are available. Generally, candidates must be college graduates, and preference in granting scholarships is given to persons *with* sight.

For further information, write: Dr. Edward J. Waterhouse, Director, Perkins School for the Blind, Watertown 72, Massachusetts.

San Francisco State College, San Francisco, California

September 21, 1959 - January 20, 1960—First Semester.

February 16 - June 10, 1960—Second Semester.

Courses specific to the curriculum for teachers of the visually handicapped: Education of visually handicapped children, including structure and function of the eye, survey of education of visually handicapped children, principles and methods—partially seeing, methods of teaching blind children, and advanced Braille; Sociological and psychological implications of blindness; Problems of preschool blind. Related courses in the education of the exceptional.

For information, write: Mr. Robert A. Bowers, Assistant Professor in Education, San Francisco State College, 1600 Holloway Avenue, San Francisco 27, California.

University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota

September 28 - December 19, 1959—Fall Quarter.

January 4 - March 19, 1960—Winter Quarter.

March 28 - June 11, 1960—Spring Quarter.

Courses designed to prepare teachers to work with blind and/or partially seeing children: Introduction to the education of visually handicapped children; Education of partially seeing children; Beginning Braille I; Advanced Braille II; Education of blind children in the elementary grades; Education of blind students in secondary grades; Educational and social implications of visual impairment; Student teaching with visually handicapped children. Related courses in fields of: Psychology; Child growth; Development and education.

For further information, write: Miss Jeanne R. Kenmore, Department of Educational Psychology, 15A Pattee Hall, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis 14, Minnesota.

Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan

For information, write: Mr. John J. Lee, Chairman, Department of Special Education, Wayne State University, College of Education, Detroit 2, Michigan.

The President's Corner

By Donald W. Overbeay, President

American Association of Instructors of the Blind

On pages 91-93 of the May, 1957, issue of *The International Journal for the Education of the Blind*, under "Joint Services and Mutual Assistance Between the AAIB and the AFB," one finds set forth a basis for cooperation between the American Association of Instructors of the Blind and the American Foundation for the Blind. Here, spelled out in detail, are areas of mutual interest and the principles governing financial assistance from the AFB to the AAIB.

Since this statement was published, the AAIB has received $12,000.00 for three Workshops for Houseparents and an Arts and Crafts Summer Workshop. Annual meetings of the Long-Range Planning Committee of the AAIB with M. Robert Barnett, Executive Director of the AFB, and staff, have resulted in better understanding of the philosophy, program and needs of the "Foundation" and the AAIB.

During the past *eight* years the officers and members of the AAIB have become increasingly aware of the need for a national office strategically located and manned by competent professionally-orientated personnel. The AAIB could not continue to grow as a professional organization, increase its membership, and work cooperatively with agencies and sister organizations entirely with volunteer leadership.

The AAIB could not continue to effectively do its part of any cooperative activity without a minimum staff of its own. An executive secretary and an office secretary could not be employed and an office established with the limited funds available.

A formal request was made of the AFB for funds which would enable the AAIB to develop itself and, by so doing, to better assist the Foundation and other organizations. The leaders of the AAIB are generally in agreement about the several large areas of national planning which should be given priority by the Foundation and the AAIB. Following are some examples of these areas:

"1. Further expansion of training facilities for all types of personnel peculiar to the field of education of blind children.

"2. The identification and application of principles and standards of administration and content of courses of study in school systems for the youthful blind.

"3. Cooperative conduct of certain basic and applied research between the AAIB, the American Printing House for the Blind at Louisville, the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and the Foundation.

"4. Improvement of knowledge about and facilities for the vocational training of youthful blind persons, utilizing both locally and nationally the growing programs of rehabilitation for adults.

"5. Development of policies, principles and agreement upon regional planning for the diagnosis and instruction of blind children with other physical or mental disabilities."

The type of activity in which the two organizations already have cooperated shall be continued on a project-by-project basis.

The Foundation has agreed to extend to the AAIB the sum of $12,500.00 in one payment annually in each of the calendar years of 1959 through 1964 for the general purpose of assisting the AAIB with its self-development as a *professional* association for educators of blind youth. The extension of this annual stipend from year to year will be subject to annual review each April by the Executive Committee of the Board of the AFB. The grant will be

terminated on December 31, 1964.

A Nominating Committee has been appointed to select and recommend to the Board one or more candidates for the position of executive secretary of the AAIB. This committee — Dr. Eber L. Palmer, Superintendent of the New York School for the Blind, Batavia, New York; Dr. Robert H. Thompson, Superintendent of the Michigan School for the Blind, Lansing, Michigan; and Egbert N. Peeler, Superintendent of the North Carolina School for the Blind and Deaf, Raleigh, North Carolina — will solicit and screen candidates for the position.

The selection and appointment of a capable executive secretary and the establishment of a strategically-located office does not mean that the need for dedicated and intelligent volunteer leadership will end. A wise executive secretary will encourage an even larger number of our best to devote more of their time to the AAIB and its purposes. He will better coordinate the efforts of all who are concerned with the education of blind children.

TO PUT IT BRIEFLY

News and Views from the Field

Journalistic adage: "Be brisk, be brief, be bright, be right!"

March 9, 1959

Dear Mr. Carter:

I think the following news is worthy of publication in *The International Journal* as our problem has had wide interest. I know that I had many inquiries at the convention last summer relative to our school being relocated.

On March 4, 1959, the South Dakota Legislature concluded a 60-day consideration of moving us, by passing all necessary legislation to that end. We are to be placed in Aberdeen, the third largest city in the state. Our campus will be only about two blocks from the Northern State Teachers College, the largest such institution in the state.

We were given $800,000 to start construction of the new school. We anticipate $450,000 more in 1961 to complete the job.

We naturally are very happy to get relocated and I am sure that many of our professional friends will be anxious to hear of our good fortune. The Governor has advised me that he will sign the bill on March 11, 1959.

Sincerely yours,
Walter Hack, Superintendent
South Dakota School for the Blind

The Magnet-Graph

The Magnet-Graph is a device which enables a blind or partially blind person to read and to make many of the graphs and diagrams which appear in ordinary textbooks, newspapers, or magazines. The idea occurred to Byron B. Ballard, a teacher in the High School Department of the New York State School for the Blind, at Batavia, New York, when he recognized the increasing difficulty his students encountered when trying to answer questions on the Regents' Examination which contained all sorts of graphs, diagrams, and charts.

This device is really simple. In order to get tactual representations which correspond to characters used in the ink print which are represented by the usual key to the ink-print chart or graph, pieces of board or dowel were cut into squares, triangles, circles, half circles, etc. A little experimentation indicated that each piece should be about an inch long across its greatest side. Each piece was cemented to a small, but strong magnet. These magnets will adhere to a four foot square of sheet metal, which has been fitted into a wooden frame.

We were amazed at the ease with which these magnets slid along the metal and yet remained in place, because of the magnetic attraction, so that the students could readily examine the diagrams made by the pieces of wood without displacing them.

One of the more interesting projects was the construction of a Gothic-style church. The key made in Braille indicated the part of the church which each specific piece represented. In this way, the flying buttresses, the columns, the arch, the frieze, and the bas relief were all readily comprehensible even to those with very little or no vision. At least, they were more comprehensible than they have been before. In the same way, oil wells, mountain areas, contour maps, outline maps, vital statistics charts, etc., took on a new meaning for these students. The Magnet-Graph was made here at the school by Mr. Roy Seekins, school carpenter, and Mr. Jake Stranton, electrician. Mr. Paul Ruhland, Principal, also contributed many valuable suggestions.

Anyone wishing further information regarding detailed construction of the Magnet-Graph may obtain a pamphlet containing a diagram and other facts pertinent to its use by getting in touch with the writer.

Byron B. Ballard
New York State School for the Blind,
Batavia, New York

Methods in Conversational Spanish

Classes in Conversational Spanish are being offered this year in grades five through eight in the Oklahoma School for the Blind. These classes are in the experimental stage, as this is the first time that Spanish has been taught here on this level.

Since we are introducing Spanish to children who have not studied it before, care must be exercised to insure that the children thoroughly understand each expression. Furthermore, since pronunciation habits will be fixed now, phonetic drills are of great importance. Each class should proceed with the drills at its own speed, thoroughly mastering each combination of sounds before proceeding to the next one.

The child starts with easy conversation and only after he has learned to understand the words does he start to read. He does not need to worry about the technicalities of grammar. Any question the child may ask pertaining to grammar should be explained without undue emphasis.

Although new words are introduced each week it is necessary to drill constantly on words that have already been learned. Short stories accompany each new vocabulary. Questions pertaining to the story are asked and answered in Spanish. Then, with the new vocabulary, the students carry on a conversation of their own. The lessons should be brought as close as possible to the children and their everyday life.

Other methods used are listed as follows:

1. Children dramatize real-life situations wherever possible. For instance, children can pantomine washing their faces. This dramatization is useful in that it gives the words concreteness.

2. Pictures may be used for the partially sighted. The blind will benefit from the conversation about the pictures. For instance, there may be a picture of a lady with the following conversation: "Mi

mamá se llama la señora Lopez. Mamacita es muy buena y muy bonita. Es baja, delgada y chica. Tiene treinta y cinco años. Es rubia. Su pelo es rubio y tiene los ojos azules."

3. Objects may be used for the blind and partially sighted. Games are made wherever possible. One child may leave the room and the others may decide on one particular object. When he returns, he will name classroom objects until he guesses the corect one. Then he can name his successor. This not only helps the child to learn the vocabulary, but it is fun.

4. It is easy to teach numbers. Probably, it is better always to present each number in isolation rather than in succession. Simple contests, such as letting one row or group compete against another, will keep the repetition from becoming tiresome.

5. A tape recorder is used to record Spanish conversations and stories. The children hear their own mistakes and are able to correct them. They also become accustomed to hearing different students speak Spanish. After one class records an exercise, it is played for the other classes.

6. Recordings of the voices of Spanish-speaking people are used wherever possible. This enables the child to become accustomed to hearing the language as spoken by Spaniards and Spanish Americans.

7. Rhymes and songs are learned.

A Spanish proverb says that, "He who would understand his neighbor must put the head into his house." In the stories we are beginning to read, we are doing just that. We are not only learning to speak Spanish, but we are learning about the customs and culture of Spanish-speaking people.

Mrs. Brookie F. Maycher
Oklahoma School for the Blind

EAAB Wrestling Tournament

So loud and continuous was the tumult caused by the cheering section of four of the nine schools participating in the Eastern Athletic Association for the Blind Wrestling Tournament, that the officials had to stop the match and ask for quiet. From then on the cheering sections showed their enthusiasm in between matches and at the end of each period.

The 13th Annual EEAB tournament was concluded Saturday evening, March 7, 1959 at the Maryland School before an enthusiastic crowd in a jam-packed gymnasium. Nine schools—Connecticut, New York Institute, Perkins, Maryland, Overbrook, Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia and North Carolina—vied for the championship which began Friday evening, March 6th, and continued through Saturday afternoon and evening. By Saturday evening the third and fourth place contests were ready to begin. At the conclusion of these events, the cheering sections of Overbrook, Perkins, New York Institute and Maryland were introduced and they "strutted their stuff" to an attentive audience.

At the conclusion of last year's tournament, Virginia and Overbrook tied for first place and thus were this year's defending champions. Consequently, these teams strove very hard to defeat all opposition. Needless to say, the competition grew very keen. From the very beginning of this tournament, the wrestling was at its best. There were a number of outstanding bouts with wrestlers so closely matched that none could predict the final score. In general, all wrestlers did their best to give the crowd a thrill as well as bring merit to themselves and to their schools. However, it did not take long for Virginia to prove her superiority in this meet, as this school finished 26 points ahead of the nearest competitor.

The final scores and positions were:

1. Virginia .....89 points
2. West Virginia 63
3. Maryland 42
4. Western Pennsylvania 37
5. Overbrook 36
6. New York Institute 33
7. Connecticut 15
8. North Carolina .....12 } tie
9. Perkins .....12 }

The following were the respective First-Place winners in each weight class:

95 lb.—Tom Samber .....W. Pa.
103 lb.—Karl Garrett .....Overbrook
112 lb.—Richard McCauley .....Perkins
120 lb.—Benny Holloman .....N.Y.I.E.B.
127 lb.—Eddie Bennett .....W. Va.
133 lb.—Burton Boyer .....Va.
138 lb.—Charles Abel .....Va.
145 lb.—Clyde Taylor .....Va.
154 lb.—Bill Unger .....W. Va.
165 lb.—Phillip Rowe .....W. Va.
Heavyweight—Woodrow Adkins ..W. Va.

Joseph J. Kerr
Secretary-Treasurer, EAAB

Other Tournament Results

A late report from John Gillen, Athletic Director at the Minnesota Braille and Sight Saving School, host school to the North Central Association of Schools for the Blind, gave the following team results for the annual wrestling tournament held February 6th and 7th: Missouri, first place with 112 points; Michigan, second place with 84 points; Iowa, 41; Kansas, 38; Minnesota, 26; Illinois, 23; Nebraska, 20; and South Dakota, 0.

From newly elected secretary Bob Young of the Texas School for the Blind, we have the results of the Southwestern Association of Schools for the Blind tournament, held February 21st at the Tenessee School for the Blind: Arkansas, first place with 58 points; New Mexico, 52; Texas, 35; Tennessee, 33; and Colorado, 22.

Bowling League Results

Those who read the article on bowling (March issue of *The Journal*) will probably be interested in the outcome of the league play, which terminated in March. The National Bowling League of Schools for the Blind was divided into an Eastern and a Western division. California was pitted against New Mexico in the final series of Western division play and went into the series trailing New Mexico by one game. However, the boys from Berkeley took the series, 5 games to 1, and won the right to meet Ohio in the championship playoff between Western and Eastern division leaders. Ohio had made a runaway of the Eastern race, but were off form in the playoff, and won only 1 of the 6 playoff matches. New Mexico played Tennessee for third position honors and won all 6 of their games.

Here are a few facts and figures to give those interested in joining the league some idea of the calibre of the *best*: Ohio had a high-game record of 803 pins, and a 3-game record of 2240. California had a 6-game record of 4278, and averaged 619 for the season. Ohio's season average was 624. North Carolina was the most improved team, increasing its average by 85 pins during the season.

Totally blind bowler records were, for example: Bob Harris, Ohio, with a 3-game total of 445 pins, and Vera Martinez, Nebraska, 318. Tim Marshall, Ohio, had a one-game score of 171 (good in *any* league). An outstanding sighted bowler was a California boy, Bonnie Sewell, who averaged 153 for the season, and came in for such scores as 1067 in a six-games series. Ron Swihart, Ohio, bowled high game (210) and high 3-game series with a 561. But, don't let this frighten you. Most of the bowlers average 100 (more or less) per game, and even the best have their bad days.

V. R. Carter, NBLSB Secretary

Dr. Francis M. Andrews, Superintendent of the Maryland School for the Blind, represented the AAIB at the Inter-agency Commitee of the CEC at a conference held on January 14, 1959, with fourteen national agencies participating.

The conference discussed Public Laws 85-905 and 85-926 which deal respectively with movies for the deaf and the training of teachers for the mentally retarded. The implications of the National Defense Education Act with reference to Title 4 was also discussed.

On January 27 and 28 Dr. Andrews also represented the AAIB at a conference held at the U. S. Department of Education. The topic discussed by twenty-three national organization was: "What Makes a Good Program for the Education of Exceptional Children?" Participants were privileged to have Arthur S. Flemming, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, address the group on the morning of the twenty-eighth. During the discussion periods it was noted that some nineteen gaps in the field of special education are rather evident. These were:

1. Lack of adequate certification standards for teachers.
2. Conflicting training standards.
3. Lack of planned facilities for teacher training (transfer of credit.)
4. Lack of departmental autonomy in teacher preparation.
5. Improvement of laboratory facilities, student teaching, internships for leaders—work with parents.
6. Strengthening doctoral programs.
7. Experimentation and research in procedures and methodology.
8. Study of criteria for laws and regulations.
9. Lack of knowledge about the nature of financial problems; programs vs. programs, etc., internal analysis.
10. Standards for school construction.
11. Strengthening regular teacher preparation in background or orientation to special education.
12. Financial aid for preparation of leadership personnel.
13. Numbers of children not being served.
14. Parent-teacher communciation.
15. Responsibilities of agencies working with children and adults—rehabilitation objectives—continuity differentiation—cooperation of all ages.
16. Preparation of non-professional personnel.
17. Confusion in terminology and communication in general.
18. Quality of instruction.
19. Better public relations.

According to Dr. Andrews, none of the above is particularly new to those in the profession as they have been evident for many years, but perhaps after numerous conferences these shortcomings will be eliminated.

Wayne A. Reed, Deputy Commisisoner of Education, spoke to the conference and emphasized that the Office of Education is accelerating its studies and research in the field of special education.

On February 4, 1959, Dr. Andrews was one of the participants on the TV program "This Is Your Life." The subject was William E. Powers, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Rhode Island. According to many viewers, Judge Powers made an excellent appearance as also did Mr. Hannon, the blind lawyer. This program was an inspiration, not only to blind people, but to the parents of blind children.

On February 13 Dr. Andrews also attended another conference at the request of the AAWB which was held at the U. S. Department of Education on "1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth." AAIB is highly appreciative of the representation Dr. Andrews has given the Association during the early months of 1959.

The Arkansas School on Educational TV

In cooperation with the State Department of Education and its educational television series, "Parents Should Know," the Arkansas School for the Blind presented a program on March 20 depicting some of the activities of our daily school curriculum.

We developed a thiry-minute skit showing pictures and "live" scenes of our faculty and students in normal classroom activities. We gave continuity to the scenes with a detailed narration describing or explaining the activity being enacted.

As the narrator, a member of the staff, gave a brief historical background of our institution, the camera was focused on pictures of the various buildings on our campus. These pictures had been taken recently by a faculty member.

During a brief explanation of the Braille system, we showed large cardboard posters of the Braille cell, the alphabet, and the number signs.

To show how our beginners are taught the communication skills, we had a child from our kindergarten demonstrate the use of the marble board, the pin board, and shellacked Braille cards. Another child wrote with a slate and stylus and on a Braillewriter. He read what he had written and explained how a single dot plus one letter often stands for a complete word in Braille, thus showing the need for oral spelling in schools for the blind.

We depicted scenes from our sight-saving classes by having children read from books with 18 and 24 point type, write in manuscript on a chalk board, and write on sight-saving paper in cursive script.

We explained the importance of typing to blind children and had an advanced student use an electric typewriter to copy a business letter from a dictaphone tape.

Other teaching aids specially adapted for use of blind children that we employed were the relief map, an arithmetic slate, and a Talking Book.

Braille music was described as a begining piano student read from a sheet of Braille music the notes for the right hand and the left hand, played each hand separately, and then played them together. An advanced piano student played a selection after the narrator told of our success in state and regional music festivals with sighted competition.

From the boys' industrial arts department we showed the developing of manual dexterity in crafts classes with a boy caning an antique chair. We displayed small items of furniture made in shop classes to show our boys' ability with hand and power tools.

A "live" scene from a girls' craft class showed one girl working at a six-sided frame and others engaged in the sanding and glazing of ceramics. A large ceramics display included such finished products as ash trays, earrings, jelly dishes, and figurines.

The home economics girls modeled their latest creations while a blind seamstress operated an electric sewing machine.

Because of the lack of stage space, we decided to substitute pictures of physical activities for the "live" scenes from our physical education department. We showed pictures of track events, wrestling, and standard games modified for blind and partially-sighted participants. Naturally we showed some of our outstanding wrestling trophies, including this year's first place trophy from the tournament of Southwestern Schools for the Blind.

Our course in independent travel was depicted by the kindergarten teacher's demonstrating her method of teaching our beginners directions and object perception. An advanced blind student walked about easily with the white cane as an aid.

We at the Arkansas School believe that this television program provided us one of the best means of public relations that we have ever had; and, from the response that we have received, we are convinced that the public is better informed as to our role in

the education of the visually-impaired children of our state.

Mary Harper Sowel, Typing Instructor
Arkansas School for the Blind

Houseparent Institutes

The *Journal* has featured considerable material about houseparents of recent, and we still have an article or so to run. There have been three excellent institutes for houseparents during the last two years. We know that all three have quite good coverage of the proceedings in the form of pamphlets or books. Whether or not there is any charge for these, every school and agency, and many individuals, should have a copy or so. These may be obtained by writing to the superintendent of any of the three host schools: Mr. Egbert Peeler, North Carolina School for the Blind and Deaf, Raleigh; Dr. Everett Wilcox, Oregon State School for the Blind, Salem; and, Dr. George D. Heltzell, Missouri School for the Blind, 3815 Magnolia, St. Louis 10.

AAIB-AAWB Braille Authority Appointed

Mr. D. W. Overbeay, President of the AAIB, and Mr. H. A. Wood, President of AAWB, have announced the creation of a new three-member committee designated as the AAIB-AAWB Braille Authority. Miss Marjorie S. Hooper, Braille Editor, American Printing House for the Blind; Mr. Bernard M. Krebs, Librarian, New York Guild for Jewish Blind; and Mr. Paul J. Langan, Far East Counselor, American Foundation for Overseas Blind, have accepted appointments to serve the field as an interpreting authority for all matters pertaining to Braille in this country. The following directive issued jointly by the Presidents of the two Associations sets forth the responsibilities of the new group:

"It shall be the duty of the AAIB-AAWB Braille Authority to make decisions, issue interpretations, render opinions, and to present recommendations pertaining to all provisions of ENGLISH BRAILLE-AMERICAN REVISION, 1959; the American usage of the REVISED INTERNATIONAL MANUAL OF BRAILLE MUSIC NOTATION, 1956; and the NEMETH CODE OF BRAILLE MATHEMATICS. The Braille Authority shall make annual reports to the Board of Directors of the AAIB and the AAWB, and any recommendations for additions, alterations, or changes in the codes shall be submitted at that time."

The group was delegated to elect its own Chairman and at its first meeting on January 13, 1959, Mr. Paul J. Langan was chosen to act in this capacity. The experience of the members of the Braille Authority extends over the fields of embossing, publication, libraries, transcribing, education and international cooperation, which provides them with a broad understanding of the problems relating to Braille. All decisions, interpretations and opinions issued by the Braille Authority will be the result of the combined thinking of the group. Technical assistance and advice will be obtained by the Braille Authority on the special codes for Braille music notation and mathematics from sub-committees of experts in these fields.

The Presidents of the Associations also wish to announce that they have received notification from the AAIB-AAWB Braille Authority that the editing of the final draft of ENGLISH BRAILLE—AMERICAN REVISION, 1959, has been completed and turned over to the American Printing House for the Blind, the official publisher of the manual in this country. Orders for Braille and ink-print copies should be placed directly with the American Printing House for the Blind in Louisville, which will make an announcement in the near future as to when copies will be available. As ENGLISH BRAILLE—AMERICAN RE-

VISION 1959 was officially adopted by joint resolutions of the AAIB and AAWB in conventions last summer, presses and transcribers are authorized to begin using the new code as soon as it is released from publication.

All communications to the AAIB-AAWB Braille Authority should be directed to the Chairman, Mr. Paul J. Langan, American Foundation for Overseas Blind, 22 West 17th Street, New York 11, N. Y.

100th Anniversary of Braille Observed

On February 27, on the 108th birthday of the Missouri School for the Blind, the 100th anniversary of the introduction of Braille into the western hemisphere through that school was observed with an appropriate ceremony.

The introduction of Braille into the western hemisphere through the Missouri School for the Blind was surely a momentous occasion. In 1859, Dr. Simon Pollack, one of the first members of the Board of the Missouri School, went to Paris to study and observe educational procedures being used there. The system of writing used by the blind had been conceived by Louis Braille, whose name it bears, and was being used by the Paris Institute and perhaps a few other schools on the continent. Dr. Pollack was so impressed with this process that he brought it back to the school in which he was so interested and introduced it there. From this beginning, it has spread until it has become the universal method of reading and writing used by the blind.

The Director of the Paris Institute for the Blind acknowledged the cablegram and expressed his delight in receiving it in a letter to the Superintendent of the Missouri School for the Blind.

Gretchen T. Gilles, Librarian
Missouri School for the Blind

Necrology

Word has just been received of the untimely death of Edward W. Tillinghast, Jr., only child of Edward W. Tillinghast, Superintendent of the Arizona School for the Deaf and Blind, on March 28, 1959, the result of an automobile accident. In addito his parents, Mr. Tillinghast is survived by his wife, whose father was a former Principal of the Texas School for the Deaf. Burial was in Oakwood Cemetery in Austin, Texas.

Current Literature

Dr. W. G. Scarberry has called our attention to a recent autobiography entitled CORRIDORS OF LIGHT, by Dr. Eleanor G. Brown, ($3.00, Antioch Press, Yellow Springs, Ohio) and he describes it as one of the most readable and inspiring books ever published by a sightless individual. Dr. Brown, a graduate of the Ohio State School for the Blind, earned her way through college, became a teacher in the public schools of Dayton, Ohio, and then went on to earn her doctor's degree at Columbia University. She then continued teaching in Dayton until her recent retirement.

Dr. Brown's life is described by one commentary as being "as direct and simple as the phrases she has used to express it, not the least being, 'We progress through change.'" Though blind from early infancy, Dr. Brown has progressed from a childhood hindered by medical ignorance, financial troubles, and poor health, to become the first blind woman to receive a Ph.D. from Columbia University and also the first to launch a teaching career of over forty years in the Dayton Public Schools. More recently, Dr. Brown has filled her days with travel, lecturing, and occasional substitute work in the Dayton schools. Her autobiography is rich with experiences of her teaching career, and the earlier years, with all of the crises resolved and the challenges met; and is living proof of her belief

that "We progress through change."

Another book of recent copyright, autobiographical in nature, is Robert J. Smithdas' LIFE AT MY FINGERTIPS ($4.00 Doubleday; Braille edition, $7.80 pp. APH). We wish to quote from the *Book Review Digest* regarding this book: "Blind and deaf from the age of five, now a public relations counselor and lecturer, the author recounts . . . his training at various institutions where he learned to communicate through the sense of touch, becoming the second college graduate so handicapped and the first to hold a master's degree."—*Bookmark.* "Anecdotes of boyish pranks, descriptions of his adult recreations and bachelor housekeeping methods, tributes to friends, family, and teachers, and a dignified account of romance and renunciation round out a remarkable human document."—*Booklist.* "Without as much assistance as Helen Keller had, Smithdas has faced parallel and equal handicaps and overridden them, and his story is a matter-of-fact record of this accomplishment."—*Kirkus.*

V. R. Carter, Editor
The International Journal for the Education of the Blind

WHERE TO WRITE

Below are listed the sources for obtaining the quickest information about:

Submission of Manuscripts and Announcements for Publication—Mr. V. R. Carter, Editor, International Journal for the Education of the Blind, 3300 Gibson Street, Muskogee, Oklahoma.

Dates to Remember—Miss Marjorie S. Hooper, Managing Editor, International Journal for the Education of the Blind, 1839 Frankfort Avenue, Louisville 6, Kentucky. (*The Journal* solicits advance information on the dates and location of workshops, institutes, conferences, etc., which would be of interest to our readers.)

Subscriptions and Reprints—Miss Marjorie S. Hooper, Managing Editor, International Journal for the Education of the Blind, 1839 Frankfort Avenue, Louisville 6, Kentucky.

AAIB Regional Workshops and Institutes—Miss Lois V. Cox, First Vice-president, American Association of Instructors of the Blind, C/o Maryland School for the Blind, Overlea 6, Maryland. (All school superintendents and others are urged to consult with Miss Cox when making plans for such regional workshops or institutes, and to report expected dates of the conferences.)

Index Volume VIII

AAIB Membership Growth, by Huckins, Ross L. No. 3, March 1959, p. 88.
Abma, John S. The Optophone. No. 3, March 1959, p. 107.
Achievement in Arithmetic Computation by Nolan, Carson, Y., Ph.D. No. 4, May 1959, p. 125.
Additional Vacations for Missouri School for the Blind Pupils, by Heltzell, George D. No. 3, March 1959, p. 111.
Aids for Good Mobility in the Blind by Richardson, Clarence V. No. 1, October 1958, p. 1.
Are You Public Relations Wise? by Rougagnac, Mrs. Jeri. No. 2, December 1958, p. 63.
Arkansas School on Educational TV, The, by Sowel, Mary Harper. No. 4, May 1959, p. 152.
Arts and Crafts Workshop, by Leonard, Mary Dorsey. No. 3, March 1959, p. 108.
Ashcroft, Samuel C., and Nolan, Carson Y., Ph.D. The Stanford Achievement Arithmetic Computation Tests. No. 3, March 1959, p. 89.
Ballard, Byron B. The Magnet-Graph. No. 4, May 1959, p. 147.
Bourne, Angela, et al. A Report on the Grade 1 Workshop. No. 1, October 1958, p. 27.
Bowling into the Spotlight, by Carter, V. R. No. 3, March 1959, p. 100.
Bowling League Results, by Carter, V. R. No. 4, May 1959, p. 150.
Bruce, Robert E. 1958 Blind-Scout Camporee. No. 2, December 1958, p. 73.
Carter, V. R. Bowling into the Spotlight. No. 3, March 1959, p. 100.
Carter, V. R. Bowling League Results. No. 4, May 1959, p. 150.
Carter, V. R. To Put It Briefly; News and Views from the Field. No. 1, October 1958, p. 39; No. 2, December 1958, p. 70; No. 3, March 1959, p. 107; No. 4, May 1959, p. 147.
Characteristics, Training, and Performance of Houseparents, by Wilcox, Everett, Ed.D. No. 4, May 1959, p. 117.
Conference on Guidance Programs with Blind Children, A, by Davis, Carl J. No. 2, December 1958, p. 58.
Curtain Going Up, by Martucci, Ernest A. No. 3, March 1959, p. 77.
Davis, Carl P. A Conference on Guidance Programs with Blind Children. No. 2, December 1958, p. 58.
Durfee, S. B. The Status of Piano Technology. No. 4, May 1959, p. 137.

EAAB Wrestling Tournament, by Kerr, Joseph J. No. 4, May 1959, p. 149.

Education of Jack Boyer, The, by Mitchell, Paul C. No. 1, October 1958, p. 11.

Evaluation of Deaf-Blind Pupils, by Waterhouse, Edward J., Litt. D., No. 3, March 1959, p. 112.

Experiment in Group Use of the Seashore Measures of Musical Talents, A, by Forman, Hortense. No. 2, December 1958, p. 41.

Forman, Hortense. An Experiment in Group Use of the Seashore Measures of Musical Talents. No. 2, December 1958, p. 41.

Getters, Bernard C., M.D. Optical Aids for Low Vision. No. 3, March 1959, p. 98.

Gilles, Gretchen T. 100th Anniversary of Braille Observed. No. 4, May 1958, p. 154.

Grew, Mrs. Marion, et al. A Report on the Grade 1 Workshop. No. 1, October 1958, p. 27.

Haliczer, S. L. Physical Education Tests for Boys. No. 4, May 1959, p. 129.

Hamilton, Dr. Ross E. The Research Program of the National Association for Retarded Children. No. 1, October 1958, p. 20.

Heltzell, George D. Additional Vacations for Missouri School for the Blind Pupils. No. 3, March 1959, p. 111.

Hoffman, Barbara Ann. Observations and Work with Preschool Blind Children. No. 3, March 1959, p. 93.

Houseparent as a Person, The, by Members of N. C. School for the Blind Houseparents Institute. No. 3, March 1959, p. 83.

Hubbard, Ina E. An Appreciation, by Traubitz, Gretchen. No. 1, October 1958, p. 37.

Huckins, Ross L. AAIB Membership Growth. No. 3, March 1959, p. 88.

Huffman, Mrs. Mildred B. Let's Make Life and Words Meaningful to Them. No. 2, December 1958, p. 65.

Industry Looks at the Blind, by Stone, J. R. No. 2, December 1958, p. 52.

Joint Uniform Braille Committee Completes Code Revision Study, by Langan, Paul J. No. 1, October 1958, p. 30.

Kerr, Joseph J. EAAB Wrestling Tournament. No. 4, May 1959, p. 149.

Langan, Paul J. Joint Uniform Braille Committee Completes Code Revision Study. No. 1, October 1958, p. 30.

Leonard, Mary Dorsey. Arts and Crafts Workshop. No. 3, March 1959, p. 108.

Let's Make Life and Words Meaningful to Them, by Huffman, Mrs. Mildred B. No. 2, December 1958, p. 65.

Library of Congress Launches Projects to Develop 8-1/3 rpm Records and Players for Blind Readers. No. 2, December 1958, p. 61.

Light in Darkness, by Rusk, Howard A., M.D. No. 3, March 1959, p. 103.

Lowenfeld, Berthold, Ph.D. Thought and Practice Exchange Meeting at the California School for the Blind. No. 3, March 1959, p. 113.

Lucas, Mrs. Jerrine M., et al. A Report on the Grade 1 Workshop. No. 1, October 1958, p. 27.

Magnet-Graph, The, by Ballard, Byron B. No. 4, May 1959, p. 147.

Martucci, Ernest A. Curtain Going Up. No. 3, March 1959, p. 77.

Maycher, Mrs. Brookie F. Methods in Conversational Spanish. No. 4, May 1959, p. 148.

Methods in Conversational Spanish, by Maycher, Mrs. Brookie F. No. 4, May 1959, p. 148.

Mitchell, Paul C. The Education of Jack Boyer. No. 1, October 1958, p. 11.

National Committee for the Deaf-Blind Children, by Stelle, Roy M. No. 4, May 1959, p. 134.

1958 Blind-Scout Camporee, by Bruce, Robert E. No. 2, December 1958, p. 73.

Nolan, Carson Y., Ph.D. Achievement in Arithmetic Computation, No. 4, May 1959, p. 125.

Nolan, Carson Y., Ph.D. A Program of Research in Braille Reading. No. 1, October 1958, p. 18.

Nolan, Carson Y., Ph.D., and Ashcroft, Samuel C. The Stanford Achievement Arithmetic Computation Tests. No. 3, March 1959, p. 89.

N. C. School for the Blind Houseparents Institute Members. The Houseparent as a Person. No. 3, March 1959, p. 83.

Observations and Work with Preschool Blind Children, by Hoffman, Barbara Ann. No. 3, March 1959, p. 93.

100th Anniversary of Braille Observed, by Gilles, Gretchen T. No. 4, May 1958, p. 154.

Optical Aids for Low Vision, by Getters, Bernard C., M.D. No. 3, March 1959, p. 98.

Optophone, The, by Abma, John S. No. 3, March 1959, p. 101.

Overbeay, Donald W., President, AAIB. The President's Corner. No. 1, October 1958, p. 35; No. 2, December 1958, p. 68; No. 3, March 1959, p. 105; No. 4, May 1959, p. 146.

Paraskeva, Peter C. A Survey of the Facilities for the Mentally Retarded-Blind in the United States. No. 4, May 1958, p. 139.

Physical Education Tests for Boys, by Haliczer, S. L. No. 4, May 1959, p. 129.

President's Corner, The, by Overbeay, Donald W., President, AAIB. No. 1, October 1958, p. 35; No. 2, December 1958, p. 68; No. 3, March 1959, p. 105; No. 4, May 1959, p. 146.

Program of Research in Braille Reading, A, by Nolan, Carson Y., Ph.D. No. 1, October 1958, p. 18.

Report on the Grade 1 Workshop, A, by Lucas, Mrs. Jerrine M.; Grew, Mrs. Marion; Bourne, Angela. No. 1, October 1958, p. 27.

Research Program of the National Association for Retarded Children, The, by Hamilton, Dr. Ross E. No. 1, October 1958, p. 20.

Richardson, Clarence V. Aids for Good Mobility in the Blind. No. 1, October 1958, p. 1.

Rougagnac, Mrs. Jeri. Are You Public Relations Wise? No. 2, December 1958, p. 63.

Rusk, Howard A., M.D. Light in Darkness. No. 3, March 1959, p. 103.

Schmidt, Edna H. Teaching Reading by Use of Word Games. No. 2, December 1958, p. 46.

Sowel, Mary Harper. Arkansas School on Educational TV, The. No. 4, May 1959, p. 152.

Stanford Achievement Arithmetic Computation Tests, The, by Nolan, Carson Y., Ph.D., and Ashcroft, Samuel C. No. 3, March 1959, p. 89.

Status of Piano Technology, The, by Durfee, S. B. No. 4, May 1959, p. 137.

Stelle, Roy M. National Committee for the Deaf-Blind Children. No. 4, May 1959, p. 134.

Stone, J. R. Industry Looks at the Blind. No. 2, December 1958, p. 52.

Survey of the Facilities for the Mentally Retarded-Blind in the United States, A, by Paraskeva, Peter C. No. 4, May 1959, p. 139.

Teaching Reading by Use of Word Games, by Schmidt, Edna H. No. 2, December 1958, p. 46.

Thought and Practice Exchange Meeting at the California School for the Blind, by Lowenfeld, Berthold, Ph.D. No. 3, March 1959, p. 113.

To Put It Briefly; News and Views from the Field, by Carter, V. R. No. 1, October 1958, p. 39; No. 2, December 1958, p. 70; No. 3, March 1959, p. 107; No. 4, May 1959, p. 147.

Traubitz, Gretchen, by Hubbard, Ina E. An Appreciation. No. 1, October 1958, p. 37.

Waterhouse, Edward J., Litt.D. Evaluation of Deaf-Blind Pupils. No. 3, March 1959, p. 112.

Wilcox, Everett, Ed.D. Characteristics, Training, and Performance of Houseparents. No. 4, May 1959, p. 117.

Wolfe, Eldon. A Work Experience Program. No. 1, October 1958, p. 32.

Work Experience Program, A, by Wolfe, Eldon. No. 1, October 1958, p. 32.

The International Journal for

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D. W. Olson, Jr., M.S., *President*
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